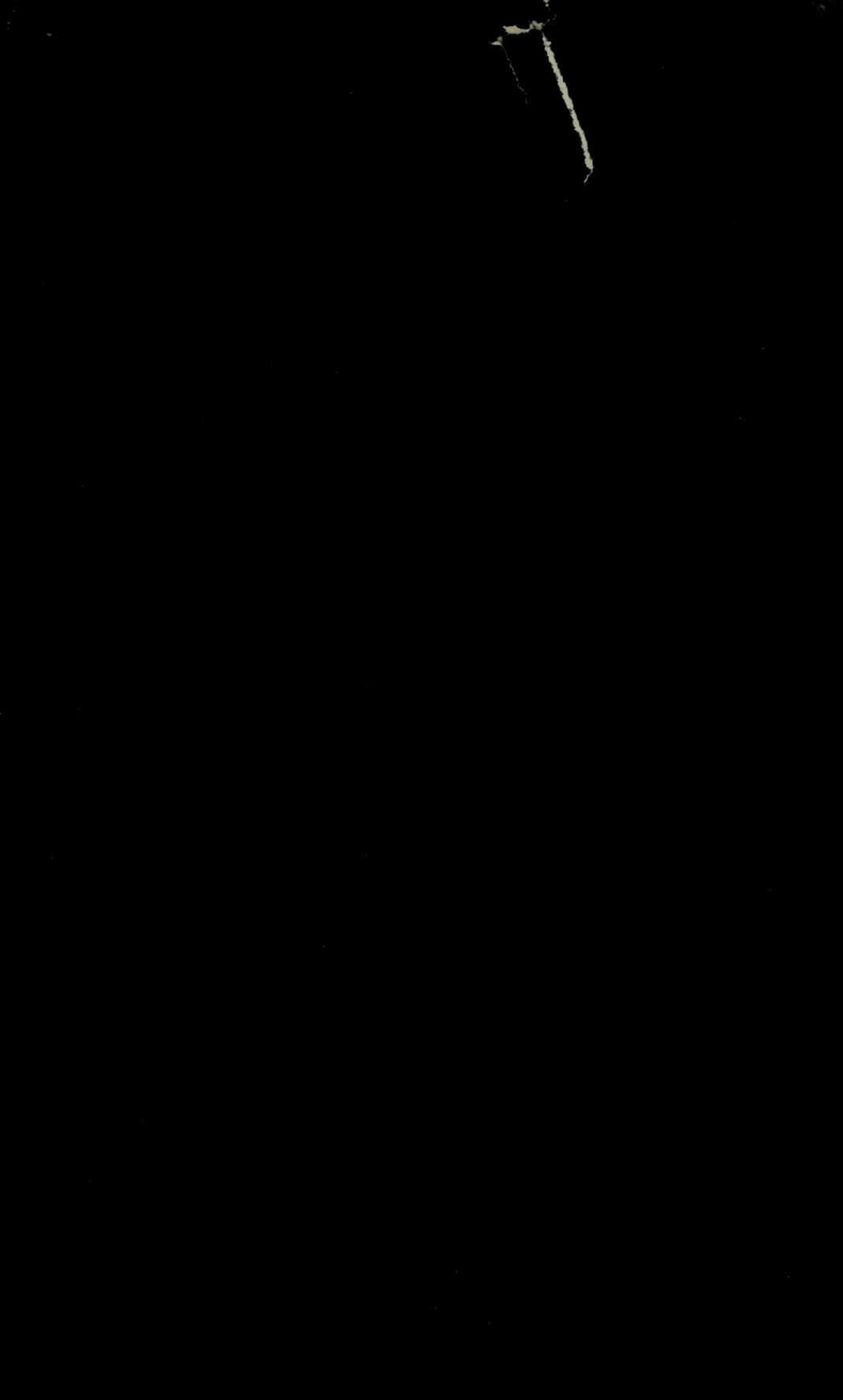




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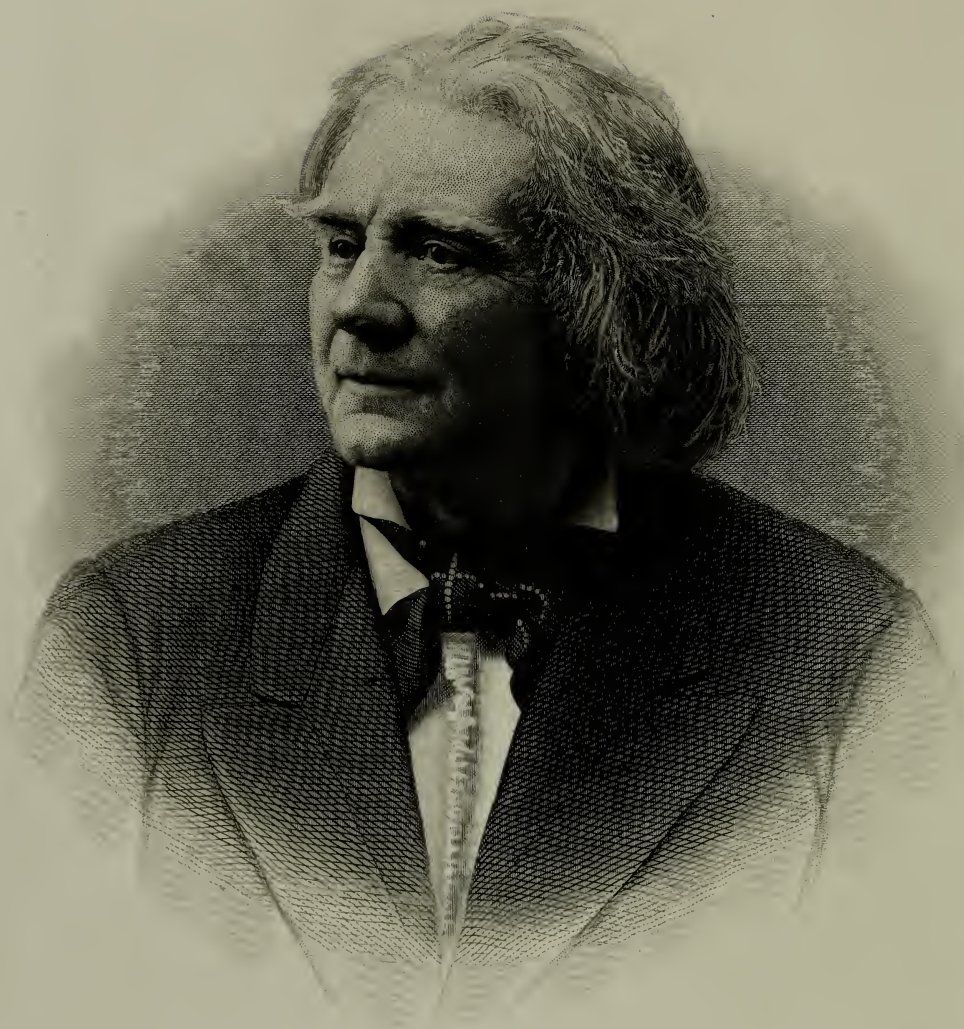








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*John Bull*

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# OLE BULL

*A MEMOIR*

BY

SARA C. BULL

WITH OLE BULL'S "VIOLIN NOTES," AND DR. A. B  
CROSBY'S "ANATOMY OF THE VIOLINIST"



BOSTON  
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*TO OUR OLEA.*





## NOTE.

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IN preparing this memoir my aim has been to use incidents, criticisms, and tributes which brought out characteristic traits, as recognized by others as well as myself, and to supply only what was needed to make the sequence clear. Many poems and tributes, and much musical criticism, have been necessarily omitted for want of space. So far as possible, writers have been credited when quoted, but I desire to make still further acknowledgment to Wergeland, Winter Hjelm, Goldschmidt, Mr. Henry Norman, and Professor R. B. Anderson, who prepared a sketch of Norwegian history, which has been given in a more condensed form.

Ole Bull was in Sweden years ago when the "union mark" was adopted, for use in the Norwegian and Swedish flags. He would himself never float any but the pure Norwegian colors, and, from the first, was most earnest and pronounced in his opinion that none but the naval and customs flags should have the union mark, as the two countries were politically united only in their relations to foreign powers. For years he was almost alone in this feeling, but the subject has recently given rise to much debate, and even heated controversy. I speak of this here, because a paragraph relating to the matter was omitted by mistake from the body of the book.

I cannot too warmly express my thanks for the help and encouragement given by friends. It is in especial recognition of the careful interest he has shown that I mention my obligation to Mr. Walter E. Colton. The admiration for his work and original research, united to a great personal regard and affection felt for him by my husband, made me desire to place in his hands the "Violin Notes," and it should be added that Mr. Colton has filled out the Note on the varnish, as he alone could have done. In Dr. Crosby's unfinished paper the bow arm and hand were not treated, and the Tartini letter is added because Ole Bull considered it the best instruction ever offered for the use of the bow. Mr. Fields's tribute was sent from his sick-room, so constant and unfailing was he ever in his thought of others. Members of my husband's family have given me anecdotes and helped to verify many incidents, and Mr. Alexander Bull kindly placed at my disposal the correspondence of his parents. To Mrs. Botta I owe the beautiful drawing made for her by Mr. Darley, at the time of Ole Bull's first visit to the United States. The engraved portrait is by Mr. J. A. J. Wilcox, from a photograph by Mora, taken in 1878. The illustrations for the "Violin Notes," from photographs by Mora, have necessarily lost in the reproduction something of their original beauty of outline and form, but they serve well the purpose for which they are inserted.

To all whose friendly services are mentioned in these pages, and to many not named, I make my grateful acknowledgment; and also to Mr. W. J. Rolfe, for kind assistance in seeing this memoir through the press.

SARA C. BULL.



# OLE BULL.



## A MEMOIR.

For Nature then  
To me was all in all. I cannot paint  
What then I was. The sounding cataract  
Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,  
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,  
Their colors and their forms, were then to me  
An appetite ; a feeling and a love,  
That had no need of a remoter charm,  
By thought supplied, nor any interest  
Unborrow'd from the eye.

WORDSWORTH.

THE quaint, picturesque old city of Bergen, surrounded by its "seven mountains," has been the birthplace of many famous Norsemen, among them Holberg and Welhaven, names that have a more than national repute. In no other city of the North has been preserved so much of the atmosphere of the olden time and history.

All who know Bergen think of its seven mountains as shrouded in mist most of the year ; but where else can one find such brilliant, sunny sum-

mer days, such pure, sweet air, fragrant with the breath of field and *fjeld*? Or who can forget the harbor as seen from the deck of a vessel slowly gliding in of a summer evening, when every tint of sunset sky is caught and reflected by the sea and the rocky mountain tops, and it seems the entrance to an enchanted land?

Its climate, as Jonas Lie has said, illustrates its folk-type; doubtless because it has helped to form it. The people are animated, enthusiastic, and practical, a curious combination of the prosaic and ideal; and all this, it is claimed, has made the old town rich in men of genius. Her children have been loyal; and the old mother, with her thousand years' history, has had no more devoted son than Ole Bull.

He was born February 5, 1810. His paternal grandmother, Gedskén Edvardine Storm, married to the apothecary and army surgeon, Ole Bornemann Bull, was sister to the poet, Edvard Storm. His father, Johan Storm Bull, like his father before him a physician and apothecary in Bergen, was an accomplished man, and a chemist of unusual ability. He had studied under Tromsdorf, and corresponded with the first German specialists of his day. His mother, Anna Dorothea Bull, was of the old Dutch family Geelmuyden. Her father, an able lawyer, died before the age of

forty, leaving his widow with several children to rear alone; and of her four sons, two were captains in the army, one was a sea-captain, and one, "Uncle Jens," for some years a merchant, and afterwards the publisher of the city's first newspaper, which is still owned by the family. The three leading professions were all represented by members of the Bull and Geelmuyden families. Johan Randulf Bull, the brother of Ole's grandfather, had, beside other offices, filled that of governor of the Bergen *stift*, or diocese, and had been noted for his generous hospitality.

Ole Bull was the eldest of ten children, seven sons and three daughters, nine of whom lived to the age of maturity, and six of whom survive him.

He was sent early to the Latin school, as the children of gentlemen usually were at that time; but the promise he gave can be inferred from the advice of his old rector, Mr. Winding, some years after: "Take to your fiddle in earnest, boy, and don't waste your time here."

Both of Ole's parents, and several members of the family on the mother's side, were musical. His father kept up the proverbial hospitality of the family, and no gatherings were more enjoyable than Uncle Jens's Tuesday quartette evenings. Uncle Jens spent much time and money to gratify his passion for music. On the quartette



evenings Ole was several times discovered, by an involuntary movement, under the table or sofa, or behind a curtain, where, having crept from his bed, he had concealed himself for hours, only to be ignominiously sent back again, after a whipping for disobedience. But, stern as was the discipline of that day, an exception was after a time made in his favor, through the intercession of Uncle Jens. He thus became familiar, while very young, with the quartettes of Krummer, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, and, as he used to say, imbibed the rules of art unknowingly; for he did not conceive the music as produced by players, but as proceeding from the instruments played, jubilating, triumphing, quarreling, fighting, with a life of their own, — a conception arising, no doubt, partly from the tales his grandmother told him of the elves and gnomes, with which the popular myths peopled forest and mountain. When, in early childhood, playing alone in the meadow, he saw a delicate blue-bell gently moving in the breeze, he fancied he heard the bell ring, and the grass accompany it with most enrapturing fine voices; *he fancied he heard nature sing*, and thus music revealed itself, or came to his consciousness as something that might be reproduced.

The influence which the popular music and mythology must have had upon a sensitive and imag-

inative child like Ole can hardly be understood by those who have been born and bred in England and America, where folk-songs and folk-lore are now almost unknown. Mr. Goldschmidt, in an article on Ole Bull in "Macmillan's Magazine," remarks:—

When, on my visits to England, I had been some time in London, in the eastern counties, in Surrey, in Kent, and in the Isle of Wight, it struck me that in my strolls through streets and lanes, high-roads and woods, I had never heard the people sing. I certainly had heard, for instance, the black minstrels and such other bands; but I do not call that a singing of the people, but a more or less bad execution of individual compositions. The people's song descends from the air; it rushes forth from the forests, the rivers, the mountains; it lives in tradition; it was never composed, never taught man by man. I remember when once, with a friend, passing over Tower Hill, hearing a plaintive sound proceeding from a crowd. I asked him what was the matter, and on being told, "A ballad singer," I hastened to the spot to catch a musical sound, however coarse, from the people of England. Alas, it was only a poor, starving woman crying out for bread, and in false rhythms offering printed ballads for sale. My thoughts reverted to the time when I visited Norway, and when, having crossed the Farn Tinn Lake and entered Vestfiorddal, Aagot, the daughter of my host, at dusk took down the *langeley* and sang. Oh, for those sweet, simple lays of love and feuds, fragrant with *naïve*

faith in a mysterious destiny, that selects the best hearts, the loveliest girl, and the bravest lad for the greatest joy and the deepest pain ! As for the strain, the music itself, if you were to ask Aagot who made it, she would not tell it to a stranger ; but perhaps later, when you had won her confidence and made her trust you were no unbeliever, no “scorner of simple folks,” she would tell you that her great-grandmother had the melody from a man whose great-grandfather had learnt it of the Fossekarl (the spirit of the waterfall), or from the Hulder, the mysterious, ever-young shepherdess, who had fallen in love with him ! If, then, you asked Aagot whether she believed in the existence of Fossekarl and Hulder, she would answer, “The parson says such beings are not, but my grandmother knew a man who had seen them.”

I have learnt from the papers that very superstitious people are found in parts of England ; so that, if superstition made music, you should be a singing people still. The question, however, is, Were you ever so ? I feel assured you were ; how else could your country have been called “Merry England” ? But since that time more than two centuries have laid on you hard work and great cares ; you have become an industrious, laborious people ; you truly earn your bread in the sweat of your brow ; the locomotive rattles on your rails, the steam-engine pants in your factories, the steam-hammer clangs. So when I see the people on a Saturday night pouring forth from these workshops, and going to lay in their stock of provisions for Sunday, I fully understand that song has left them, and that their children



have no leisure to learn the strains of their great-grandmothers : —

“For they who kept us captives bade us sing ;  
But how could we sing ? ”

In Norway, at present, steam draws a broad furrow across the land. It whistles on the railroad ; it plies on the lakes ; it knocks thrice at the mountain, and the mountain-king, opening his gate, admits the broad light of day, in which, according to the legends of old, he must die. Already the lovers of song complain of its retreat, and, following it to remote valleys, watch its dying lips to set it down in notes. But meanwhile a great representative of Nature's music, of the people's song, had gone forth to the wide world, — Ole Bull.

Uncle Jens played the violoncello well, and had a collection of instruments. He loved to amuse himself with little Ole's extreme susceptibility to music. When he was three years old, Jens often put him in the violoncello case, and hired him with sweetmeats to stay there while he played. But the candy could not keep him quiet long. The eyes kindled, and the little feet began to beat time. At last his nervous excitement prevented his staying longer in the case. The music was dancing all through him, and he must give it utterance. Running home, he would seize the yard-stick, and, with another small stick for a bow, endeavor to imitate what his uncle had played. He heard it with his inward ear ; but, for fear his

parents were not so pervaded with the tune as he was, he would explain as he went along, telling how beautifully the bass came in at such and such a place. Seeing the child play this rustic and soundless fiddle, his uncle bought him, when he was five years old, a violin "as yellow as a lemon." He used to tell, later, how he felt carried up to the third heaven when his own little hand first brought out a tune from that yellow violin. He loved it and kissed it; it seemed to him so beautiful, that little fiddle! To the surprise of the family, he played well on it from the first, though he had received no instruction. He would stand by his mother's knee while she turned the screws, which would not yield to his little hand; and the tuning was not easily accomplished, since his ear made him very critical even at that age. His uncle taught him his notes at the same time that he was learning his primer.

His father would not permit him to play till study hours were over, and he could not practice regularly, but made the violin rather his recreation. Sometimes, however, he disobeyed, playing too much and missing his lessons, for which his back had to smart both in school and at home. It was a paternal rule that a whipping at school had to be repeated at home. Still he managed to get through his elementary studies, and when he



reached the higher branches of knowledge he surprised everybody by his remarkable quickness and penetration. In mythology he had no peer in the school, and his imaginative, dreamy soul reveled in all the weird stories about Odin, Thor, Balder, Frey, and the whole race of gods, giants, norns, elves, and dwarfs that fill the old Valhalla of the Norsemen. He was never happier than when he could persuade his grandmothers to tell him strange ghost stories, and sing the wild songs of the peasantry. The creative and imaginative cast of his mind also gave him a profound sympathy with nature, and he was fortunate in having a home in the midst of grand scenery.

Prof. R. B. Anderson thus writes of Ole's boyhood : —

I once asked Ole Bull what had inspired his weird and original melodies. His answer was that from his earliest childhood he had taken the profoundest delight in Norway's natural scenery. He grew eloquent in his poetic description of the grand and picturesque flower-clad valleys, filled with sighing groves and singing birds ; of the silver-crested mountains, from which the summer sun never departs ; of the melodious brooks, babbling streams, and thundering rivers ; of the blinking lakes that sink their deep thoughts to starlit skies ; of the far-penetrating *fjords* and the many thousand islands on the coast. He spoke with especial emphasis of the eagerness with which he had devoured all myths,

folk-tales, ballads, and popular melodies ; and all these things, he said, "have made my music." And we would emphasize the fact that these things made his music, not alone by their influence upon his mind, but also by the impression they had made upon several generations of his ancestors who had contemplated them. Ole Bull's ancestors have, on both sides, been people of culture and refinement for many generations. When we see a beautiful and thoughtful face, we do not always consider how much the ancestors of that man or woman must have suffered and labored and thought before that beauty and intelligence became possible.

It happened that the hospitality of Ole's father was the means of bringing the boy his first teacher. Herr Paulsen was a Dane, a good artist, a man of solid musical acquirements and knowledge, who could play the fiddle "as long as there was a drop in the decanter before him." He chanced to meet Ole one day at the house of a more humble colleague, with whom he would condescend to take his schnapps, and began to visit the apothecary's house, "to educate the little artist," as he said. And he would sit and play till he *had* drained the last drop from the decanter, which the hospitality of the time could not deny him. So thoroughly had he enjoyed the social, and we may say convivial, life of Bergen — for the suppers were often more than social at that time — that he had delayed his return home from month to

month, and stayed on indefinitely. When his clothes grew threadbare, his friends would give him a new suit and a benefit concert, from which he often received some hundreds of dollars.

Ole's parents were not pleased with the neglect of his studies, caused by his fondness for the violin, and their intention of entirely forbidding him the instrument was hanging like a thunder-cloud above his head, when, on his eighth birthday, he gained a decisive victory.

One Tuesday evening Paulsen played, as usual, the first violin in Uncle Jens's quartette. But when they left the supper-table he was hopelessly *hors de combat*. In this unfortunate dilemma good-natured Uncle Jens shouted, "Now, Ole, you shall play in Paulsen's stead! Come, my boy, do your best, and you shall have a stick of candy!" at the same time handing him Paulsen's violin. The half-serious, half-joking command Ole accepted in earnest. A quartette of Pleyel, which he had heard several times, was chosen, and his memory served him faithfully; to the astonishment of all, he played each movement correctly. He not only executed the difficult passages, but marked the rests,—in short, gave it as an artist should.

This was his first triumph, with all its train of consequences. His delighted uncle immediately



had him elected an active member of the Tuesday club, of whose performances he had before been but a clandestine and often ingeniously hidden listener; and, through his mother's intercession, it was arranged that Paulsen should give him lessons regularly.

About this time a Frenchman arrived in Bergen with violins for sale. One of them, bright red in its color, gained the boy's heart at first sight, and he pleaded with his father till he consented to buy it. It was purchased late in the afternoon, and put away in its case. Ole slept in a small bed in the same apartment with his parents, and the much-coveted instrument was in the adjoining room. Ole Bull, telling this incident in later years, said, <sup>1</sup>—

I could not sleep for thinking of my new violin. When I heard father and mother breathing deep, I rose softly, and lighted a candle, and in my night-clothes did go on tiptoe to open the case, and take one little peep. The violin was so red, and the pretty pearl screws did smile at me so! I pinched the strings just a little with my fingers. It smiled at me ever more and more. I took up the bow and looked at it. It said to me it would be pleasant to try it across the strings. So I did

<sup>1</sup> This story is given as written by Mrs. Lydia Maria Child, who heard Ole Bull tell it when he first came to the United States. Mrs. Child always preserved better than any one else his peculiar manner of narration.

try it, just a very, very little ; and it did sing to me so sweetly ! Then I did creep farther away from the bedroom. At first, I did play very soft. I make very, very little noise. But presently I did begin a capriccio which I like very much ; and it do go ever louder and louder ; and I forgot that it was midnight and that everybody was asleep. Presently, I hear something go crack ! and the next minute I feel my father's whip across my shoulders. My little red violin dropped on the floor, and was broken. I weep much for it, but it did no good. They did have a doctor to it next day, but it never recovered its health.

The tears would always fill Ole Bull's eyes when he spoke of this great childish sorrow.

The violin with which he now practiced was too large for him. When he placed it in the usual position for playing, it hurt his neck and fingers, and compelled him to hold his arm in the way which from that time became a habit with him. At ten years of age he could play passages which his teacher found it impossible to perform ; but nothing would come to him by the mechanical process. His genius positively refused to go into the strait-jacket ; and when father and teacher coaxed and scolded, the nervous child at last screamed with agony. This untamable freedom was his strongest characteristic. At school the confinement of four walls would sometimes become so oppressive that he would suddenly

spring out of the window into God's sunshine and air. His father often gave him permission to go to the woods of a holiday, and not seldom released him from the Sunday morning service, which was very tedious in the cold, dreary church with its close air, and where he must listen to the singing of the congregation so dreadfully out of tune to his ears. He realized in later years how his father must have sympathized with him in relaxing, as he did, the discipline which was much more strict then than nowadays. An indication that his father was yielding to a recognition of his son's determination to study music, was the fact that, on his ninth birthday, he presented him Fiorillo's "Studies," which he had ordered from Copenhagen. During that year Waldemar Thrane, the violinist, visited Bergen, and Ole played one of the Studies for him.

We have heard from his own lips and from others that he was very fond of composing original melodies, and in these he took especial pains to imitate the voices of nature; the wind in the trees, the rustle of the leaves, the call of birds, the babble of brooks, the roar of waterfalls, and the weird sounds heard among his native mountains.

As a boy he became passionately fond of Lysekloster, a large estate to the south of Bergen, which he visited with his father when he



was eight years old. His brothers relate how his glowing descriptions would tempt them to start out with him to take the twenty-mile walk from Bergen to Lysekloster, and how, one after another, they would fall behind, while he would run the whole distance with but one or two stops. Lysekloster is, indeed, one of the most charming spots in all Norway, and to Ole Bull was "the loveliest on earth." In its noble forests and streams, its broad outlook upon sea and *fjords* with their many islands, upon mountains and glaciers glittering in the distance, will be found Ole Bull's weird music transformed into landscape. Lysekloster was the chief delight of his boyhood, his manhood, and his age. A rock, which he climbed when a boy to get a splendid view, is still pointed out by the peasants, who called it at that early day "Ole Bull's Lookout."

Ole was exceedingly fond of beautiful cocks, and when eight or nine years old, after he had played in public, while walking home carrying his violin in a gingham bag, he discovered one of the finest specimens he had ever seen, and was so fascinated and bewitched that in watching it he forgot himself, stumbled, and fell into the muddy gutter. But a kind lady had watched the boy with amusement from her window, and came to his rescue. She took him into her house, washed

and dried the bag, gave him apples, and sent him home happy, telling him not to let the cock lead him astray again. He adopted later for his crest a cock with the motto, "Bellum vita, vita bellum."

Ole and his six brothers used to select sea-shells of different tones to blow upon, and under his direction they practiced until they produced some very musical and pleasant effects. At other times he and his brothers Jens and Randulf would improvise songs with accompaniments, taking turns in improvising and accompanying.

The mother took great pains in training her children in manners. They had to go out, rap at the door, and enter the room again and again until they acquired the desired bearing, and this exercise was often repeated. After they were grown up, one of the brothers was about to pay a visit to some friends in town one evening. He had said his "Farvel" and gone through the form of leave-taking, but on reaching the hall, he remembered that he had left something in the sitting-room. With his hat on his head he rushed back to get what he had forgotten; but his mother, who observed him, quietly crossed the room and gave him a box on the ear, saying: "That is the way he must be treated who has forgotten to show due respect to his mother!"

The family spent their summers at Valestrand,



a country house about twenty miles east of Bergen, which had long been in the possession of the Bull family. The children always looked eagerly forward to the sojourn there, and there Ole was always very happy. He would seek out the most solitary places, where he could sit and play undisturbed. Occasional solitude was already in his childhood a necessity; so many thoughts and melodies crowded in upon him that he felt a desire to run away from everybody and wander off into the world of fancy, where no human being could disturb his quiet dreams. Soon alarming rumors about ghosts, hobgoblins, trolls, and other supernatural beings went abroad at Valestrand. It was whispered among the peasants that fiddle strains had been heard at most unseasonable hours from the very mountains. The *Hulder* had come back to take possession of them again. Old half-forgotten stories and traditions were revived and circulated; it was considered no longer safe to go abroad alone. But one of the men ventured at last to investigate the matter more closely. He cautiously approached the place whence the tones proceeded; trembling with fear he came nearer and nearer, and there, way down in the bottom of a "giant's cauldron," of which there are many at Valestrand, sat the goblin perfectly concealed playing the weirdest

marches and dances on a little violin. The secret was out. There was the little Ole, utterly unconscious of all the excitement and terror he had caused in the neighborhood, and merely provoked that anybody should have discovered his secret chamber so well hidden by the bushes.

At Valestrand he was free, and the impressions he received were very vivid. The atmosphere was filled with music, and in music all he felt or experienced had to be expressed. If he could not make his instrument utter his thoughts to suit him, he would, after patient trials, at last fling it away and be angry with it for many days. He would not even look at it. Then he would perhaps suddenly get up in the middle of the night, seat himself at the open window in his night-dress, and play the strangest airs and melodies. He was frequently scolded for disturbing the peace of the night, but seemed not to hear when he was in this mood. At other times he would play almost incessantly for days together, hardly eating or sleeping in the mean time.

He was a mere boy when he began to study the nature and construction of the violin. Frequently he would take it all to pieces when he was dissatisfied with it, put each part by itself, dry them in the sun, and then put them together again, more or less pleased with the result.

No place could have been better fitted than Valestrand to give a healthful impulse and development to the lads, who scaled the cliffs and mountains, swam the lakes, and sailed their boats on the *fjords*. They used to pride themselves on living out-of-doors as woodsmen, and would have liked to sleep as well as eat in the woods. Ole led his younger brothers in all their games and sports, except fishing and shooting. He always had an aversion to these pursuits, which could not yield him pleasure enough to compensate for the pain inflicted; and he never overcame this feeling.

With all their activity it was remarkable, the brothers have since said, that they escaped wholelimbed, and sometimes with their lives. When grandmother was questioned once by a friend as to how she could rest when the boys were with her at Valestrand, she answered: "Why, my dear, if we sent nurses after each one, what would their guardian angels have to do?" So for their summer vacation they were given their freedom. The sisters were, of course, kept more at home, but they, too, had a good time in the hay-field, and joined in some of their brothers' frolics.

The death of a baby sister made a deep impression on Ole, and he told, in one of the last years of his life, how he had stolen into the room where



the little one lay so still, but so beautiful, and alone kept watch while his heart seemed breaking. When he grieved he could seldom speak of his sorrow, and he passed through that experience alone, none of the family knowing then, or later, of the watch he had kept with the dead child.

At the age of nine years Ole played the first violin in the orchestra, when his father acted at the theatre; and it may be added that his father was one of the best amateur actors in Bergen, and knew all Holberg's and Wessel's dramas by heart.

From 1819 to 1822 Ole received no musical instruction whatever. He had outgrown his former teacher, Paulsen, who, to the astonishment of his friends, suddenly left Bergen. Mr. Goldschmidt says: "This act of his was variously interpreted; I prefer to explain it by an allusion to an old Danish tale of the elf king, who must vanish when a real king enters his dominions."

In 1822 a Swedish violinist, Lundholm by name and a pupil of Baillot, settled in Bergen. From him Ole now received instruction; but a coldness soon sprang up between pupil and teacher. The latter was very strict, and insisted that no deviations from established rules should be permitted. He made the lad stand erect with

his head and back against the wall while playing, and this, no doubt, gave him that repose and grace of bearing so noticeable in later years. But fortunately Mr. Lundholm did not succeed in making Ole hold his violin according to the accepted rule, as the boy would go almost frantic at times when this was attempted; and this independence of study and method developed later into an interesting episode, to be related after a slight digression.

One of his father's assistants played the flute, and used to receive musical catalogues from Copenhagen. Ole devoured the names, and for the first time saw that of Paganini in connection with his famous twenty-four "Caprices." One evening his father brought home two Italians, the first Ole had ever seen. He was then fourteen years of age, and their talk was a new revelation to him. They told him all they knew of Paganini, the very mention of whose name excited him. He afterwards related the story to a friend thus: —

I went to my sympathizer and said: "Dear grandmother, can't I have some of Paganini's music?" "Don't tell any one," said the dear old woman, "but I will try to buy a piece of his for you if you are a good child;" and she did try, and I was wild when I at last had the Paganini music. How difficult it was, but oh, how beautiful! The garden-house was more than ever

my refuge, and perhaps the cats, who were still my only listeners, were not so frightened at my attempts as at my earlier efforts to play Fiorillo's "Studies," when I really drove them from their food.

On a Tuesday quartette evening, Herr Lundholm played Baillot's "Caprizzi," and I was greatly disappointed at the pedantic, phlegmatic manner in which he rendered the passionate passages. A concerto of Spohr's lay on the leader's stand, and while the company were at supper I tried the score. Carried away with the music, I forgot myself, and was discovered by Lundholm on his return, and scolded for my presumption.

"What impudence! Perhaps you think you could play this at sight, boy!" "Yes, I think I could." And as I thought so, I don't know why I should not have said so—do you? The rest of the company had now joined us, and insisted that I should try it. I played the allegro. All applauded save the leader, who looked angry. "You think you can play anything, then?" he asked, and taking a caprice of Paganini's from the stand, he said: "Try this." Now it happened that this very caprice was my favorite, as the cats well knew. I could play it by heart, and I polished it off. When I had finished they all shouted, and, instead of raving, as I thought he would, Lundholm was more polite and kind than he had ever been before, and told me that with practice I might hope to equal himself some day.

About this time Ole's fiddle brought him his



first gift. There lived an old man on the outskirts of the city who passed his life in solitude, occupying a house with a small garden around it. Ole had heard many stories of his miserly and eccentric ways, and magnified them till he felt a fear of him. When he took his walks in the country, he would always run as fast as he could past this lonely house, and he never breathed freely till he was well beyond the garden fence. One day the old man stood at the gate and called to Ole. The boy trembled, but his training made him instinctively greet the stranger with respect, though he would fain have taken to his heels.

"Are you the son of Johan Bull? Are you the boy that plays the fiddle?" "Yes, sir." "Then come with me," he said, as he turned and walked up the path to the door. Ole hesitated, but when his companion added, as he looked back and observed that Ole was still at the gate, "I have a fiddle I bought in England that I want to show you," the boy bounded up the walk; and he soon found that the old man had a kind face, now that he dared to look at him.

The fiddle proved to be in need of bridge and sounding-post, but the boy was happy enough when told that he might whittle out the missing parts. After adjusting these as well as he could and tuning the strings, he tried the old bow,

which was much the worse for wear and neglect. His new friend sat by interested, and kept time with his head and foot while Ole played the folk dances and songs. Then he asked the boy if he had ever heard "God save the King." "Yes, I can play it for you if you like," said Ole, who soon perceived by the old man's brightening face and interested nods that he had hit upon his favorite tune. Many times he had to repeat it, and finally, when he improvised two or three variations on the air, his delighted listener made him promise that whenever he passed the house he would come in and play that tune for him. Ole was treated to cakes and milk, and felt himself a distinguished guest.

The following afternoon towards dusk the door-bell rang and a basket was found in the hall. On opening the basket Ole's mother discovered four pair of doves, all rare and very beautiful. A card attached to a blue ribbon round the neck of one bore Ole's name. The delighted boy recognized at once the choicest birds of the cote which his friend had shown him the day before, and he told his parents all about his visit. He did not forget his promise, but often went and played "God save the King" for the old man.

Ole's father wished him to become a clergyman, and thinking that the boy would do better



in his studies with a private tutor, who could have an eye to him constantly, engaged a Mr. Musæus (known later as the rector Musæus). This man, it is said, had great abilities, but afterwards, when appointed master of a public school, brought disgrace upon himself by his cruelty. At the slightest offense given by a boy he would summon the school together and, after offering a fervid prayer that the punishment he was about to inflict might benefit the culprit, he would fall on him like a savage. This tutor, declaring Ole's musical tastes incompatible with his studies, forbade him to play the violin; and thus the boy could only indulge at night in an inclination that now, under this restraint, became a passion.

The boys had long and patiently borne both cross words and blows from Musæus, but at last they ceased to consider patience a virtue. A council of war was held, and they solemnly resolved that when occasion offered they would teach the tyrant a lesson. But this required courage. Ole had developed into an athletic fellow, even more robust than his brothers, and they naturally looked to him as leader in the bold enterprise.

One morning when at half past four their tormentor appeared and dragged out the youngest from his warm bed, Ole sprang upon him with a

growl. A violent struggle followed, but Musæus was no match for the lithe and powerful lad. The younger brothers, who had promised to assist, uncovered their heads now and then to cry, "Don't give up, Ole! Don't give up! Give it to him with all your might!" In the midst of this excitement the maid came up to make the fire, and with the tongs in one hand and shovel of coals in the other she stood rooted to the spot with astonishment, though at the same time she was evidently not displeased at the schoolmaster's plight. A moment later the mother came running up the stairs in her green wrapper and with nightcap on her head. She supposed the house had caught fire. But Ole neither heard nor saw anybody, till Musæus, all out of breath, collapsed on the floor and gave up beaten. "That will do now," said the father, who had just appeared on the scene. Ole expected a storm, but felt a sense of relief when he saw his parents exchange an amused look as they left the room. From that day he felt that he could go to his father with any real grievance, and be listened to. He was more consulted, too, as to his inclination for certain studies and work. All this made him very happy and more desirous than ever of carrying out his father's wishes.

After having spent three years in study with

the private tutor, Ole Bull was sent in August, 1828, to the University in Christiania. His fame preceded him. His originality and the independent control he had gained over his instrument had secured for him a position far above that of the amateur, and his reputation as a remarkable player may be said to have been pretty well established at the capital before he came there to take his *Examen Artium*.

When restrained by his tutor from playing, Ole resorted to whistling and singing, and he soon found that he could do both at the same time. In this way he studied the laws of harmony. Ere long he was able to whistle and sing and accompany himself on two strings, and later he succeeded in playing on all four strings at once. These studies enabled him at length to combine six different themes at the same time, a sort of fugue study which he always enjoyed.

His father, aware of his passion for music, earnestly entreated him not to yield to it, and Ole's way to Christiania was paved with the best intentions to obey. But on arriving there he was met by friends — students from Bergen — who invited him to play at a concert to be given that very night, for a charitable purpose. "But," said Ole, "my father has forbidden me to play." "Would your father prevent your doing an act of charity?"



“Well, this alters the case a little; and I can write to him and claim his pardon.”

The performers at this concert were all *dilettanti*, and two of them became later ministers of state. The next evening a young professor of the University had a quartette at his home, and Ole, on being pressed to take a part, thought, “Well, my father himself would no doubt wish me to be on a good footing with one of the professors;” and he went. They played all night, until seven o’clock in the morning, and at nine o’clock Ole was to go up for his written examination. Scarcely able to keep his eyes open, he wrote a Latin exercise that could not pass, and according to the severe rules of the University, he was *rejected* for the year. In the deepest despair he went to his host the professor, who laughingly said: “My good fellow, this is the very best thing that could have happened to you! Do you believe yourself fitted for a curacy in Finmark or a mission among the Laps? certainly not! It is the opinion of your friends that you should travel abroad: meanwhile, old Thrane having been taken ill, you are appointed *ad interim* musical director of the Philharmonic and Dramatic Societies.” A month later, on the death of Thrane, Ole Bull was regularly installed in these offices, and thus at once attained independence, having

gained a somewhat reluctant pardon from his father.

Henrik Wergeland writes:—

It was at this time I first became acquainted with him; a tall, somewhat overgrown, sickly-looking youth, with a splendidly developed bust, but with a nervous irritability of temperament; his open face was very pale, and the large, clear eyes were set deeply under the brow. He liked to talk of what he was going to write, and he actually did compose some bits, mere bagatelles, puffs of smoke, with a few glittering gleams from that fire which flamed behind the clouds. His ideas were as yet crude, but there was creative imagination in them. His plans were as yet forced, but they ran out into picturesque and grandly romantic effects. His state of mind was still chaotic, but it was that kind of chaos from which Schiller sent forth "The Robbers;" that kind of chaos which forebodes a brilliant revelation. He also liked to talk of politics and literature; but he was not always mindful of the talent most persons have for catching the words and dropping the thought. When gainsaid he might become provoked, not from egotism, or pride, or sensitiveness, but simply from the exaltation of his mood and the excitement of the moment.

There was that froth in him which belongs to all good and strong wine, and when others cautiously retired a step or two, I was tempted to throw myself on his neck, for I felt that he was a most modest, unpretentious man, childlike, trusting, and true. As yet, no memory of achieved triumphs had thrown its glare or its shadow



about him ; he stood there in the pure light of his great and noble hope. He was not, however, at rest in Christiania. His mind was in a state of restless agitation. He was like a balloon straining and tugging to get loose from its moorings and rise into the upper air. At last he determined to go to Cassel, to Louis Spohr. He wanted the verdict of a real master ; he wanted the consecration of the true high-priest ; and May 18, 1829, he hurried off for the land of promise. But he left behind his violin, and his friends had to send it after him. This may perhaps be explained by the fact that he left Norway when the excitement was at its height concerning the interdiction of the observance of Independence Day, the 17th of May, in which he had taken part.

This seems to be the best point at which to introduce a short sketch of Norwegian history, enough to show the relation which Ole Bull bore to his country and her men in his youth and manhood.

Norway had for four hundred and thirty-eight years, from 1376 to 1814, been united to Denmark ; but the example of America and France in the second half of the 18th century had awakened the spirit of independence. During the war between England and Denmark, all communication between Norway and the latter country had been cut off, and the Norsemen were learning to rely on themselves.

The Swedes had, during the time of this union,

made repeated attempts to conquer Norway, but without success. When, in 1809, they were compelled to cede Finland to Russia, they again turned to Norway, with a stronger determination than ever for the conquest of that country. This would indemnify them for the loss of Finland, and circumstances seemed to favor their ambition. The old king, Charles XIII., was a mere shadow of power, and the Swedes had chosen Bernadotte, the successful French general, to be the successor of their childless sovereign. England favored the designs of Sweden.

In 1813, Napoleon was beaten by his united opponents, and Karl Johan (Bernadotte) marched with a united Swedish and Russian army against Denmark, to invade Holstein. The Danes fought bravely, but were obliged to surrender. On the 14th of January, 1814, the union between Denmark and Norway was dissolved. The treaty of Kiel, signed on that day, provided that Sweden should have Norway, and in return should assume the payment of a part of the debt of Norway and Denmark. Norway's old tributaries, Iceland, the Faroes, and Greenland, were to remain subject to Denmark. In accordance with this treaty, King Frederic VI. issued a proclamation to the Norwegians, and released them from the oath of fealty to him.

The Norwegians would not submit to this bargain and sale. There was but one sentiment among the people — the defense of their independence. All Europe was against them, and they were poor and few in numbers; still they dared to make resistance.

In 1814, the Danish Crown Prince, Christian Frederic, had been appointed governor of Norway. He went to Drontheim, intending to have himself proclaimed monarch, by virtue of his inherited right, but he found the sentiment in favor of a free constitution, and some were in favor of proclaiming a republic. Those who did not recognize his claims had already made a draft of a constitution. This was the celebrated Adler-Falsen constitution, from which many important paragraphs were embodied in the present Norse constitution. At Eidsvold, thirty miles north of Christiania, several of Norway's most prominent men had assembled on the 10th of February to discuss the fate of their country. One of their number, Sverdrup, uncle of the present president of the Storting, succeeded in convincing the Prince and making him acknowledge that the people had the right to frame their own constitution. Meanwhile, Prince Christian was to govern the country with the title of Prince Regent. A convention of delegates elected by the people was



to be called at Eidsvold, for the purpose of preparing the constitution. In a letter dated the 19th of February, 1814, Christian Frederic agreed to this.

A day of fasting and prayer was appointed. The people were instructed in regard to the state of the country in their churches, and they were sworn to defend with their lives and blood the independence of their fatherland. Two men were to be chosen in each parish as delegates to the national convention. All this was carried out.

On the 17th of May, 1814, the constitution was adopted by the convention. It provided that the people should make the laws through their chosen representatives; that the people alone could impose taxes; that the press should be free, and that no hereditary rights should be acknowledged. Prince Christian Frederic was chosen King of Norway.

Karl Johan of Sweden, with thirty thousand men sent him from Russia in recognition of his services against Napoleon, and with the promised help of England, Prussia, and Austria, invaded Norway. Utterly abandoned, opposed by all the powers of Europe, the famished, poverty-stricken country had only its just cause to depend upon for its success. Delegates from Austria, Russia, Prussia, and England arrived in Christiania, and



all expressed the desire of their respective governments that Norway should be united with Sweden. This was refused. War was proclaimed on the 30th of June.

A few unimportant battles were fought, and the advantage was on the side of the Norwegians with their small force of twenty thousand men, which could not be increased on account of the scarcity of food.

Karl Johan knew that Sweden was as much in need of peace as Norway; that the union was doubtful; that he would not be able to conquer Norway without help from his allies, who had not yet sent their forces. Should he delay, the monarchs might prefer to put a prince of the true Oldenburg blood on the throne of Norway, and his own position might be weakened by the reinstatement of the old monarchical families after the fall of Napoleon. He determined on a *coup d'état*. After a two weeks' war he abandoned his claims under the treaty of Kiel and acknowledged Norway's right to determine her own future. He suddenly proposed a treaty on the basis of her independence, and agreed to accept the constitution recently adopted at Eidsvold. In the course of a few months a parliament met, accepted the resignation of Christian Frederic, adopted the constitution of Eidsvold, organized the government,

and elected Karl Johan king on November 4, 1814.

Norway was thus united to Sweden, and had secured for herself one of the most liberal constitutions in Europe; and the fruit of it was a new life in her industries, her literature, and her art.

With Iceland, Norway had enjoyed a golden literary epoch from the 11th to the middle of the 14th century. It was the epoch of the Eddas and Sagas. During the four centuries of union with Denmark the country had been more or less shrouded in intellectual darkness. The people preserved their ballads, their popular melodies, their folk-lore and legends, but the literary record of the period shows only here and there a name of any note.

In the 18th century, Norway produced several distinguished poets, among whom should be mentioned Holberg, the father of modern Danish literature, who was born in Bergen in 1684; Wessel, Vihe, J. N. Brun, Monrad, Fasting, the brothers Frimann, Zatlitz, Rein, and Edvard Storm. Ole Bull was related to Holberg and Storm. The distinguished naval officer Tordenskjöld was a Norwegian. Many of these men were members of a Norse Society organized at the Copenhagen University, and they, with their love for Norway and faith in her people, may be

said to have laid the foundations of her independence. Some of them lived to see this independence accomplished.

With 1814 began a new epoch in the liberty of the country. It was soon demonstrated that the national spirit was not dead. Men appeared who were able to build up the literature, arts, and sciences of the country, and later Ole Bull led the van among the artists, and inspired those who came after him with courage. He convinced not only the outside world, but the Norsemen themselves, that they could foster sons worthy of their old renown.

The indirect influence of Ole Bull's success upon the art and literature of Norway was very great. The ambition of many a youth was kindled by him, who afterward became widely known as musician, painter, sculptor, or poet.

In 1828, Ole Bull became acquainted with two young men in Christiania who were destined to wield a mighty influence on Norse literature and politics. The one was Johan S. C. Welhaven, born in Bergen in 1807, the other Henrik Arnold Wergeland, born in Christiansand in 1808. Both became very eminent poets, and about 1832 both were leaders of contending parties. Wergeland gave the first poetical expression to the glowing patriotic enthusiasm for liberty and indepen-



dence. He desired to root out every vestige of Danish influence. Welhaven was the leader of the conservatives, and aimed to build the Norse culture on the basis of the Danish. The discussion, at first limited to the students of the University, soon became a national issue in which every thoughtful man and woman in the land took part.

Wergeland died at the age of thirty-six, but he lived long enough to see his cause victorious, and the fruits of his labors are felt to-day.

In the celebration of Independence Day commemorative of the Norse constitution, Wergeland saw a powerful means of waking the people from their political sleep to a patriotic fervor. He used all his influence to promote the celebration of this day, which was as unpopular as possible with the king. The latter had more than once attempted to bring about changes in the constitution, but the people had been true to it, refusing to amend it even at royal request.

On the 17th of May, 1829, a peaceful gathering of people in the Christiania market-place was attacked and dispersed by a troop of cavalry. Ole Bull was with Wergeland, who was severely wounded by one of the soldiers. This roused the people to preserve and defend their rights. The 17th of May has been celebrated with increasing



enthusiasm ever since, and Wergeland's name is never omitted from the orations of the day.

The day following the battle of the marketplace and the first celebration of the 17th of May, Ole Bull, as we have said, left for Cassel to visit Spohr. His reception there was a cold one. "I have come more than five hundred miles to hear you," Ole Bull said, politely, to which Spohr replied: "Very well, you can now go to Nordhausen; I am to attend a musical festival there." To Nordhausen he accordingly went, where he heard a quartette by Maurer, performed by the composer himself, Spohr, Wiele, and the eldest of the brothers Müller. He was so overwhelmed with disappointment at the manner in which the composition was played by these four masters — a manner which differed so utterly from his own conception — that he left the concert with the crushing conviction that he was deceived in his aspirations, and had no true calling for music. He determined at once to give up art and to return to his academic studies.

Falling in with some lively Göttingen students, returning from a trip in the Hartz Mountains, he joined them and went to Göttingen. He stayed there some months, and a merry life his violin called forth. The burgomaster of the neighboring town, Münden, heard of the foreign student

who played so marvelously well, and asked a friend to bring him with some other musical acquaintances to Münden, to give a concert for the poor. One fine summer morning, accordingly, eight young fellows set out for Münden, four playing in one carriage, four singing in another. In grand state the two carriages drew up before the door of the burgomaster, who in full dress received his guests, and immediately led them to the dinner-table. Ole Bull anxiously observed during the feast how one after another of his assistants dropped off into dreamland. He remonstrated, but was only laughed at; he was in despair, and at last angry. The toasts still kept up: "Long life to the burgomaster — his wife — his daughter — the good city of Münden," etc., and when, at length, they rose from the board, with shaky knees and dizzy heads, the violinist knew not what to do. No rehearsal was held, and none was possible. The last piece on the programme was to be an improvisation, "The Storm," in which the student Ziedler was to give the thunder on the piano in accompaniment to the violin; but he was fast losing himself. Ole Bull expostulated with him, and tried to rouse him, but in vain. At last, losing his temper in his despair, he called him *Dummer junge* (stupid fellow). This, as the reader familiar with the customs of the German

students knows, is an offense that blood alone can redress. Ole Bull accepted the challenge which followed, practiced fencing for a week, acted on the suggestion of tiring out his adversary by dexterous parrying, and gave him at last a slight scratch. Then came a grand scene of reconciliation, and eternal friendship was sworn ; but the director of the police gave the party a friendly hint to leave the town.<sup>1</sup>

September found Ole Bull again in Norway ; and a friend wrote thus of his return : —

Feeling as if the very soil of Europe had repelled him, he returned to Christiania. It was a wet autumn evening, and he went to the theatre, the musical direction of which he had given up. While standing there in a dark corner, he was soon recognized, and it was whispered through the house, "Ole Bull has returned ;" then, the whisper rising into a loud cry, the violinist was called to the direction of the orchestra ; and on his taking the bâton the audience called for the national anthem, thus welcoming him as with the heart of the nation.

To go to Paris, to hear De Beriot, Baillot, and Berlioz, now became his absorbing plan. In the summer of 1830 he visited Trondhjem and Bergen, and gave three concerts, from which he made

<sup>1</sup> This is the sole foundation for the absurd story that has appeared in certain encyclopædias, to the effect that Ole Bull had killed a fellow-student in a duel.



five hundred dollars. In August, 1831, he went by sea to Ostend, and thence directly to Paris. Seven years passed before he saw Norway again, but good reports soon came from him, and these grew in number and frequency. When he finally came himself, his reputation was made.

His stay in Paris was a venture which brought him many hardships, but which ended like a fairy-tale in a piece of good fortune. His recommendations from home opened no serviceable doors to him, and to his violin no one seemed willing to listen. A passer-by might stop for a moment and ask, "Who lives here? He plays well." A grisette might open her window across the street, and look at "*le pauvre jeune homme là*." A melancholy acquaintance among the German musicians might sit down before him in unavailing admiration. But no lessons from Baillot, no engagement at the Grand Opéra, and every day the purse growing leaner and leaner. The cholera was raging terribly in Paris during that winter of 1831. The Revolution of the previous July was still a vivid memory, and under the feverish excitement of danger and death the pulse of life beat with double rapidity in the great city. Madame Malibran was singing at the Opéra, and the house was crowded nightly by the enthusiastic Parisians. In the topmost gallery, in one of the cheapest



seats, might be seen a tall young man with feverish eyes, drinking in those tones with his whole soul.

He had still sufficient means to carry him through the winter; but an elderly gentleman who lived in the same house, and who, with a shrewd mingling of cordiality and dignity, played the part of a fatherly friend, contrived to win his confidence, and persuaded him that, in the disturbed state of financial affairs, his money was not safe where he had deposited it. He therefore drew it from the bank. The following morning found him robbed of everything but an old suit of clothes, and his paternal friend gone. He was now reduced to extreme want; but an acquaintance, accidentally meeting him, recommended him to Madame Charon, with whom he himself boarded, and who kept a house patronized chiefly by German music teachers and scholars. She offered to receive Ole Bull until he could hear from home, his friend giving security for sixty francs a month, which provided the young man with black bread for breakfast, and, towards evening, with a dinner of two slices of meat, the first course of soup being much like that which made the sailor boy exclaim, "This is very good; I have found one pea!"

As time went on Madame began to look suspi-

cious, and his friend's manner grew cold. One morning at breakfast, a stranger appeared, who at once attracted his attention. He had black, rough hair, his complexion was olive, his eyes black, large, and penetrating. His expression was cynical, but refined; his conversation cold and ironical; his figure thin and wasted; in short, he looked quite a Mephistopheles. He made a bad impression on young Bull. When told by his friend that the man was a detective, he said that he had suspected as much, which was overheard, and at first made the stranger very angry, but when Ole replied in a calm, manly way his bearing suddenly changed to one of kindly interest in the violinist. "May I trouble you a moment, sir?" Mephistopheles said; "I have something to tell you. Not far from here, in the Rue Vaugirard, is an *estaminet* where we shall be undisturbed;" and thither they went. It was one of those public houses where the lamp is kept burning all day, and young men, who look as if they had not slept at night, move round the billiard-tables in their shirt-sleeves, pipes in their mouths, and glasses filled with *eau de vie* on the window-seats and the chimney-pieces.

"Listen," said the stranger. "I know you are in want; but follow my advice; you must try your luck at play." "But I have no money."

"You must manage to get five francs ; then go to-night, between ten and eleven o'clock, not earlier, to Frascati's, in the Boulevard Montmartre. Mount the stairs, ring the bell, and give your hat boldly to the liveried servant in attendance ; enter the hall, go straight to the table, put your five francs on the red, and let it remain there."

The young man ran home, raised the five francs, and was on the spot at the appointed hour. He made his way to the green table, surrounded by ladies and gentlemen playing at *trente et quarante*. He placed his five francs on the red, but through his awkwardness it rolled over to the black, and was lost. He stood as if struck by lightning, without a *sous* in his pocket. He came to himself on hearing, "Messieurs, faites vos jeux." He called, "Cinq francs," but his foreign accent made it sound like "Cent francs," and one hundred francs were shoved over to him as his winnings. He stands pale for a moment, unable to speak or move ; then places his money on the red, and wins once, again, and yet again, until, at last, eight hundred francs in gold lie in a heap before him. "I was in a fever," he said, when relating the adventure later ; "I acted as if possessed by a spirit not my own. No one can understand my feelings who has not been so tried, left alone in the world, as if on the extreme verge of existence,



with the abyss yawning beneath, and at the same time feeling something within that might merit a saving hand at the last moment." Suddenly, from amid the crowd surrounding the table, a delicate hand, gleaming with diamonds, glided over the golden pile; but the iron hand of the Norwegian grasped the little white one. A woman's shriek was heard; several voices called out, "*À la porte! à la porte!*" But a man near Ole Bull, in a calm, clear voice that seemed to command all in the room, said: "Madame, leave this gold alone;" and to Bull: "Monsieur, take your money, if you please." It was his strange friend, who, as he afterwards learned, was none other than Vidocq, the famous Parisian chief of police. All give way, the lady turns pale, and Ole Bull mechanically seizes the gold, but, riveted to the spot, sees red winning till the end of the *taille*. Had he had the courage, and left his money there, he would that very night have won a small fortune. Meanwhile, he had the eight hundred francs in his pocket; but it was only on reaching his room and drawing them out, and hearing the metallic clink and seeing the glitter, that he convinced himself he was not dreaming. "What a hideous joy I felt," he said; "what a horrid pleasure to hold in the hand one's own soul saved by the spoil of others!" Singularly enough, he never saw Vi-



docq again. He soon learned that a man could not be true to his art or himself who yielded to the insane excitement of the then polite recreation of gambling.

The artist's note-book, written in pencil, tells us that a house to which he removed through the aid of the Swedish ambassador, Count Lovenhjelm, was soon after invaded by cholera, which was then epidemic in Paris, and that he walked the deserted streets many a night, listening to the moans of the dying in the infected houses, hastening his steps past doors which opened for the egress of those bearing the dead.

He was again reduced to want and almost hopeless. The waters of the Seine had an alluring sound as they murmured between the stone piers of the bridges, while the noise and glare of the Parisian streets, muffled or diminished by the influence of the pest, seemed to him peculiarly repulsive and disheartening. The idea of suicide, however, it was easy to keep down ; but how subdue the fever which, from the despair of the moment and the natural excitement of his nervous system, began to affect his brain ?

One day, while roving about the streets, he stopped in front of No. 19 Rue des Martyrs. He could go no farther ; he was exhausted. The house seemed to look kindly on him, and on a

little ticket in one of the windows he read: "Furnished rooms to let." The porter insisted that it was a mistake, but remembered, at last, that on the second floor lived an old lady who had recently lost her son, and who, perhaps, might have a vacant room. The young man ascended the stairs, rang the bell, and was received by an elderly and motherly-looking gentlewoman. But, no! there was no vacant room. "Grandmamma, look at him!" cried a young girl. The old lady put on her glasses, and as she looked at Ole Bull the tears filled her eyes; he resembled so strikingly the son she had just lost. He meantime stood with a questioning gaze. At last she said: "Very well, Monsieur, if you please, return to-morrow at noon" (*à midi*). "Oui, Madame, à douze heures." A peal of laughter from the young girl greeted his reply, which only a foreigner would have made. This beautiful maiden was Alexandrine Félicie Villeminot, an orphan. She afterwards became the wife of Ole Bull.

The following day found him established in Madame Villeminot's house. He was almost immediately attacked by brain fever. On regaining his consciousness he found the old lady sitting by his bedside, and her first words were of hope and encouragement. She assured him that he need not worry about his means of payment, and

he felt the soothing influence of motherly care and affection.

He was attended by Dr. Dufours, a celebrated physician and an intimate friend of Thiers. His name occurs frequently in Ole Bull's letters, for he was the friend and adviser of himself and his family for many years.

Shortly after the young man's recovery, his friends in Christiania, learning of his misfortunes, sent him three thousand francs from the Musical Lyceum in that city. Matters now began to mend.

Paganini came to Paris the winter of 1831, and was heard for the first time by the young Norwegian, whose notes show how carefully he studied him.

About this time he tried again for a place in the orchestra of the Opéra Comique, but in vain. Applicants for the position were obliged to compete, and were given a piece of music to play at sight. To Ole Bull the piece selected seemed so simple that, in the arrogance of youth, he asked at which end he should begin. This offense caused him to be rejected without a hearing.

One day as he was examining an instrument at a dealer's, he made the acquaintance of one Monsieur Lacour, who assured him that he had discovered a certain varnish by the use of which an



ordinary violin would gain the sweetness and quality of a Cremona instrument. Ole Bull found that violins thus treated had really a fine tone, while Monsieur Lacour, on his side, amazed at the young man's power, felt that he had come across the right man to give his instruments a reputation. He arranged with him to play on one of them at a soirée to be given by the Duke of Riario, Italian chargé d'affaires in Paris. There he met a very numerous and elegant company. He instinctively felt that Fortune was in the room, if he could but catch her. But, because of the intense heat, that mysterious varnish which Monsieur Lacour applied to his violins gave forth such an intolerable smell from the assafoetida it contained that he became first embarrassed, then excited, furious, wild, — and in this state he played. When he had finished and awakened as from a bad dream, Fortune stood before him with smiles, compliments, congratulations, and, as is not always her wont, with more substantial rewards.

The Duke of Montebello, Marshal Ney's son, invited him to breakfast the next day, and shortly after, April 18, 1832, he gave his first concert under the duke's patronage in the German Stoeppel's Hall, Rue Neuve des Augustins, with the assistance of Ernst, Chopin, and other great



artists. His share of the proceeds was fourteen hundred francs. He came to know Chopin intimately, and they played often together in public and private. George Sand, in her *Malgré tout*, has given a charming account of the effect of Ole Bull's playing at that period of his life.

As the Grand Opéra was still closed to him, he soon made a concert tour through Switzerland and Italy. His first concert at Lausanne was a great success, and he assisted at a religious festival in Morges on Lake Geneva. From there he went to Milan, where he gave a concert in the Scala Theatre which brought him both money and fame. A few days afterwards he saw in one of the Milan journals a very severe criticism upon his playing. What struck him, however, was not so much its severity as its truth. It was to this effect: —

Monsieur Bull played compositions by Spohr, May-seder, and Paganini without understanding the true character of the music, which he marred by adding something of his own. It is quite obvious, that what he adds comes from genuine and original talent, from his own musical individuality; but he is not master of himself; he has no style; he is an untrained musician. If he be a diamond, he is certainly in the rough and unpolished.

The artist went to the publisher and asked who

had written the criticism. "If you want the responsible person, I am he," was the answer. "No," said the musician, "I have not come to call the writer to account, but to thank him. The man who wrote that article understands music; but it is not enough to tell me my faults, he must tell me how to rid myself of them." "You have the spirit of a true artist," replied the journalist. "It is a singing-master to whom I shall introduce you. It is in the art of song that you will find the key to the beauties of music in general, and the hidden capacities of the violin in particular; for the violin most resembles the human voice." The same evening he took Ole Bull to one of the most famous of the *repetitore*, a man over seventy years of age, who knew the traditions of the great masters and artists. Ole Bull used to say that never in his life had he been so impressed as by this old singer whose voice was broken. He found in his delivery and style the clue to the power which he had admired in the great artists. Now to him also was the secret revealed. He at once became a pupil, devoting himself to continuous study and practice for six months under the guidance of able masters, throwing his whole heart and soul into his work.

From this ardent study, assisted by eminent teachers of Italian song, came his command of

melody, which enabled him to reproduce with their true native character the most delicate and varied modifications of foreign music that he met with— Italian, Spanish, Irish, Arabian, Hungarian, as well as the national songs of his own country. But the chief result of these studies was, that he found himself; he learned to know the nature and limits of his own talent, and was able to give form to his musical feelings.

In a letter to a friend, at this time, he mentions a kind of vision which he had. Worn out and exhausted by the difficulties which he met in the work of a new composition, his "Concerto in A major," his father seemed suddenly to stand before him as he was playing, and to speak, with his eyes rather than his lips, this warning: "The more you overwork the more wretched you make yourself; and the more wretched you are the harder you will have to struggle." Ever afterwards he avoided over-practice, lest it should deaden the finer sensibilities which must be relied upon for inspiration.

In studying Italian music, he discovered how great was his need of schooling; but he found, too, that the rules taught for playing the violin were not sufficient to help him in developing the capacity of the instrument. He therefore kept up, at the same time, a course of independent



study. Here again we may quote from Mr. Goldschmidt, who says of his studies at that time :—

We will endeavor to give an exposition of the musical principles upon which he acted, and of the means by which he strove to bring them into practice. What was his aim, and how did he endeavor to reach it? We have heard of his marvelous dexterity, of wonderful “tricks” he displayed on his violin, and of “stupendous effects” which he produced,—and the question arises, Were these tricks and effects the end, as some have fancied, or were they the means to an end? I answer, they were the means to an end, and this end was *to reproduce the Hulder*. You will ask me to give you an idea of what the Hulder is, not only as a popular fancy, but as a poetic symbol. In trying to do so, let me remind you that from the mountains, forests, and valleys of the North proceeded that race which has conquered half the world; from whose love, devotion, and aspirations chivalry sprang into existence under a more Southern sky; their yearning souls and powerful hands produced the wonders of Gothic architecture; their blood throbs in the veins of your proudest aristocracy; whilst the stem tribe, remaining at home, struggling against a severe climate, against the wild beasts of the forest, and in internal feuds among themselves, had no other organs for their longings, hopes, aspirations, triumphs, and woes, than song and music. As future purple-clad kings and emperors were hidden in the “Odelsbonde,”<sup>1</sup> who sent

<sup>1</sup> A freeborn owner and cultivator of inherited soil, more than farmer and less than nobleman.



out his sons as "Vikings," so an unspeakable majesty and delicacy is hidden in the simplicity of Northern strains. But there is more. Amid the subdued yet intense feeling of the glory and dignity of man, suddenly enters the foreboding of death : there is almost always beneath the highest mirth an under-current of melancholy, — the pictures are golden, on a black ground. But, at the same time, the foreboding of death augments the feeling of life. The waters, the trees, the mountains, live a life of their own, tempting you with the sweetest, the most potent and secret powers of nature, or crushing you with their colossal strength ; no blind powers, no mere creations of superstitious terror, but always animated by a higher spirit, as behooves the fairy beings created by a big-brained race. And, amid all these sounds, terrible or mysterious, is heard the innocent bell-shaped flower, accompanied by the grass of the meadow. This may give you a faint idea of the Hulder — the spirit of the North. Southern music generally consists of sounds that please the ear, whilst Northern music strives to tell you secret tales of your own soul.

It was the Hulder which Ole Bull would reproduce on the violin ; but when he came to feel what really moved itself within him — what musical soul it was that craved for a body, a frame, a voice — the violin put into his hand and the received rules for its use were but ill-fitted to assist him in solving the problem. Therefore, descending from the heights of enthusiasm, he began to study the rudiments, and, first of all, the principle on which the old violins — the old master-makers' vio-

lins — were constructed. It has been said that those violins owe their excellence to their age alone. Why is it, then, that the Cremonese instruments are almost human in their temper and character of tone, while contemporary instruments from the Tyrol, etc., are now worth nothing? Whether the Italian masters worked with unconscious ingenuity, or acted upon the principles well known to their great musical epoch, certain it is that their violins, like the buried soul of the legend, challenge a searching question for the betrayal of their secret.

At the end of his six months' study he went from Milan to Venice where his performances created an excitement, and he was made a member of the Philharmonic Society. There and in Trieste his improvisations awakened the liveliest interest, and the extremely enthusiastic criticisms of Dr. Jael made his name known in Vienna. But he could not then visit that city, as his thoughts and longings turned toward the South. He went first to Bologna, where, in the most extraordinary way, he won the great celebrity which followed him ever afterwards, by one of those happenings in human life, stranger than those which fancy creates, and making visible, as it were, the hand of Providence. It was from Bologna that his friends at home first received the news of his triumphs.

Bologna was, at that time, reputed the most

musical city in Italy; and its Philharmonic Society, under the direction of the Marquis Zampieri, was recognized as one of the greatest authorities in the musical world. Madame Malibran had been engaged by the directors of the theatre for a series of nights; but she had made a condition which compelled them to give the use of the theatre without charge to De Beriot, with whom she was to appear in two concerts. Zampieri seized the opportunity of persuading these artists to appear in a Philharmonic concert. All was arranged and announced, when, by chance, Malibran heard that De Beriot was to receive in recognition of his services a smaller sum than had been stipulated for herself. Piqued at this, she sent word that she could not appear on account of indisposition, and De Beriot himself declared that he was suffering from a sprained thumb.

Ole Bull had now been a fortnight in Bologna. He occupied an upper room in a poor hotel, a sort of soldiers' barracks, where he had been obliged to take temporary refuge, because of the neglect of a friend to send him a money-order. Secluded from society, he spent the days in writing on his concerto; and when evening came, and the wonderful tones of his violin sounded from the open windows, the people would assemble in



the street below to listen. One evening the celebrated Colbran (Rossini's first wife, and a native of Bologna) was passing Casa Soldati and heard those strains. She paused. The sounds seemed to come from an instrument she had never heard before. "It must be a violin," she said, "but a divine one, which will be a substitute for De Beriot and Malibran. I must go and tell Zampieri."

On the night of the concert, Ole Bull, having retired very early on account of weariness, had already been in bed two hours, when he was roused by a rap on the door, and the exclamation, "Cospetto di Bacco! What stairs!" It was Zampieri, the most eminent musician of the Italian nobility, a man known from Mont Cenis to Cape Spartivento. He asks Ole Bull to improvise for him; and then cries, "Malibran may now have her headaches!" He must off to the theatre at once with the young artist. There is no time even for change of dress, and the violinist is hurried before a disappointed but most distinguished audience. The Grand Duke of Tuscany was there, and De Beriot with his hand in a sling. It seemed to Ole Bull that he had been transported by magic, and at first that he could not meet the cold, critical exactions of the people before him; for he knew his appearance was

against him, and his weariness had almost unnerved him. He chose his own composition, and the very desperation of the moment, which compelled him to shut his eyes and forget his surroundings, made him play with an *abandon*, an ecstasy of feeling, which charmed and captivated his audience. As the curtain fell and he almost swooned from exhaustion, the house shook with reiterated applause.

When, after taking food and wine, he appeared with renewed strength and courage, he asked three ladies, whose cold, critical manner had chilled him on his first entrance, for themes to improvise upon. The wife of Prince Poniatowsky gave him one from "Norma," and the ladies at her side, one each from the "Siege of Corinth" and "Romeo and Juliet." His improvisation, in which it occurred to him to unite all these melodies, renewed the excitement. The final piece was to be a violin solo. The director was doubtful of Ole Bull's strength, but he stepped forth firmly, saying, "I will play! oh, you must let me play!" and again the same unrestrained enthusiasm followed. When he finished there was a rain of flowers, and he was congratulated by Zampieri, De Beriot, and the principal musicians present. He was at once engaged for the following concert, and the assistance of the society was

offered for a concert of his own. One gentleman asked for sixty tickets, another for one hundred, and Emile Loup, the owner of a large theatre in Bologna, offered him his house and orchestra free of expense.

The wheel of fortune was turning in his favor ; the Norns were now weaving bright threads in the web of his life. He played at both concerts, was accompanied to his hotel by a torch-light procession, made honorary member of the Philharmonic Society, and his carriage drawn home by the populace. This was Ole Bull's real *début*.

Malibran was at first angry, and would neither see nor hear him. He had superseded the man she loved, and she possibly suspected some intrigue. At last she allowed him to be introduced, and civilly asked him to play something. After the first tones the blood rushed to her face, and when he had finished she exclaimed : " Signor Ole Bull, it is indeed your own fault that I did not treat you as you deserved. A man like you should step forth with head erect in the full light of day, that we may recognize his noble blood." From that time she had for him not only a friendly but an affectionate interest. Another day when he was playing at her house, she said : " He has a much sweeter tone than you, De Beriot." The latter thought that the superiority



lay in the instrument, but failed on trial to satisfy her of this.

One night at the opera Ole Bull, who was standing at the side of the stage, was so completely overcome by the dramatic power and the glorious voice of the great artist, that, unconsciously to himself, the tears were streaming down his face. Suddenly Malibran caught sight of him, turned for a moment from the audience, and without interruption perceptible to them made a most absurd grimace. The discovery of her entire self-control while she moved others to the utmost was a disappointment which he could not afterward disguise, but she laughingly excused it by saying: "It would not do for both of us to blubber;" and when he thought what a comic sight his face must have been he could not help joining in the laugh.

Another evening, having invited him to supper after the performance, Malibran insisted on hurrying him off in her carriage, and, running up the stairs to her rooms before him, she threw over him as he entered a large cape, tied on his head an old-fashioned bonnet, and, pulling down a veil over his face, pushed him into a chair in the corner behind the table just as the rest of the party were heard outside. Putting her finger to her lips to warn him to be silent, she introduced

each guest in turn to her "aunt just arrived from the country;" but after they had taken seats at the table a few cuts with her riding-whip sent bonnet and cape flying from the head and shoulders of her respectable relative.

Among the strangers who came to Bologna to attend Ole Bull's concerts was Prince Carlo Poniatowsky, who invited the artist to visit Florence; and on the 2d of May, 1834, he gave a concert there in the Cocomero Theatre. His "Concerto in A major," made the same sensation as in Bologna. He used to say that from that concert in Florence dated his confidence in his own powers.

He gave two more concerts there assisted by such artists as Duprez and Madame Ronzi de Begnis. At this time he composed his "Quartetto a Violino Solo," and his "Adagio Religioso: Preghiera d'una Madre," written for the friars of Santa Maria Novello at Florence. The circumstances attending its composition are pleasantly told by Mrs. Child.

The monks wanted some new music for their church. Ole Bull had promised it, but neglected from day to day to write it. At last, they waited upon him early in the morning, and told him it must be ready for rehearsal the next day. "I was in bed when they came," said he; "I had been up all night with the moon, sympa-

thizing with her. I had thought of Norway, of home, of many sad things. I said to the Dominicans that they should have the music the next morning. I took my violin, and it sang to me so sweetly the thoughts of the night ! I wrote down its voice, and as this brought before me the image of a mother kneeling at the altar, entreating for her child, I called it 'The Mother's Prayer.' The Dominicans complained that it was too plaintive. They said that they already had so much sad, solemn music, they wanted something cheerful. So I composed something in a more lively strain for them." This was the motive to the "Polacca Guerriera," which had occurred to him while looking at Vesuvius, and which he now wrote out for the monks on the spot, giving it an introduction and accompaniment for the organ.

These friars became very warmly attached to him, and tried hard to persuade him to join their fraternity. "A tame finale," as Mrs. Child remarks, "this would have been to the life opera which began with swinging to the winds in the tops of Norwegian pines."

During the hot months he retired to Pierro a Silve, a small village hanging high in the clefts of the Apennines. He carried a letter from the prior of Santa Maria to the prior of the cloister there. While in this mountain retreat he composed a trio, and wrote a "Grammar of the Violin" for his own use.

In the course of that season, he visited the



famous baths of Lucca. Prince Poniatowsky was there, as also the Duke of Tuscany, the Duke of Lucca, and the Queen Dowager of Naples. Malibran, De Beriot, and Döhler, the pianist, had come all the way from Sinigaglia to hear him. The morning before the concert he was to play at the Duke of Lucca's. After the introduction by the piano had been played, a buzz of conversation was kept up, in which the Queen Dowager was taking a prominent part. Döhler whispered to Ole Bull not to mind it, and begin his solo; but he quietly placed his violin under his arm in the attitude of waiting. The duke stepped forward and asked if he desired anything. "I am quite ready, your Grace, but fear to interrupt the conversation. The Queen Dowager has probably something of importance to impart, and I would not disturb her." Saying he would speak to her, the duke crossed the room, and, after a whispered sentence, she lifted her eyeglass to scan the spirited young artist; but he was not again annoyed by conversation. The next morning, Ole Bull met on the promenade Mr. Schmucker, one of the gentlemen in attendance on the Queen. He said he had come from her Majesty, who desired to see him, and proposed that he should immediately present him. The Queen opened the conversation by remarking that she supposed they

had a great many bears in Norway, to which Ole Bull replied that he had himself had the good fortune to be nursed by one, and that he should always hold in grateful remembrance its tender devotion to him. "But why," she asked, "would you not play last evening?" "I did not wish to disturb your Majesty's conversation." "Oh! I understood that you were offended; but you must overcome that sensitiveness. In Neapolitan society, conversation always goes on during music." "I should not think of visiting a city so barbarous, where music is considered a mere recreation to lighten the tedium of more important occupations, your Majesty." "But you must come! I sent for you to ask you, and I assure you that you shall have none but silent listeners, for you deserve them." The Queen continued to show her kindly interest, giving him most valuable letters of introduction, and she often used her influence in his behalf, as he found out later.

By way of Pisa, Leghorn, and Lucca,—where he once more met with Prince Poniatowsky,—he went in the autumn to Naples. The Neapolitans, like the Bolognese, were reputed for their highly cultivated musical taste; but in Naples it was vocal music which was especially appreciated, and the city, when Ole Bull arrived, was ringing with shouts and plaudits for Madame Malibran. He

waited for the conclusion of her engagement, and then played in the Theatre of San Carlo. After he had finished his "Quartetto a Violino Solo," and the audience were wild with enthusiasm, De Beriot exclaimed: "What sorcery must a violin possess to electrify the Neapolitans!" As Ole Bull left the stage after the last piece, De Beriot met him, and asked that he would wait until Malibran could come to him; he of course rushed to her box, where she received him with open arms, embracing him amid the plaudits of the vast audience.

He gave several concerts in Naples, but during his stay he met with a sad loss. His Santo Seraphino, his dear violin, which he had used in his first concert at Paris, which Chopin had helped him to procure, and with which he had won his first laurels, was stolen from him. He saw it again, many years later, in Moscow, in the possession of a Russian nobleman, to whom he told its history. To take its place, he bought in Naples a Nicholas Amati.

February 5, 1835, Ole Bull went to Rome. He led a merry life among the artists there during the Carnival. Several of these were Northmen, among whom were the Norse landscape artist, Fearnley, "the best fellow in the world," and Thorwaldsen. It was at this time that Ole Bull



completed his "Polacca Guerriera." The circumstances of its composition are given as told by Mrs. Child.

The "Polacca Guerriera" was first conceived at Naples, alone at midnight, gazing on Mount Vesuvius flaming through the darkness. He went to Rome soon after, and carried the vague conception in his mind, intending to arrange it there, and bring it out at his last concert. At Rome, he shared the apartment of a talented young artist, who became warmly attached to him. The intimate relation between music and painting was a favorite theme with this young man, and, to the musician, the sounds of an orchestra had always suggested colors. When he slept late in the morning, the artist would often rouse him by saying, "Come, Ole, get up and play to me! I can't paint unless you play to me." Being urged and urged, he would at last shake off his drowsiness, and, half dressed, begin to play. The violin would soon absorb him, till an exclamation from the painter broke in upon his reverie: "Ah, dear Ole, give me that once more, it is such a brilliant red!" or, "Play that again, dear Ole, it is such a heavenly blue!"

Thorwaldsen, who was then at Rome, loved Ole Bull with most devoted affection, and delighted in his genius. These friends, of course, felt a deep interest in his success. From day to day they would ask whether he had done any thing toward completing the Polacca. His answer always was, "No, but I *shall* do it." As the time for the concert drew nigh, they remonstrated

against such dangerous delay. "How can you be so careless of your fame, Ole?" said Thorwaldsen; "do try to have this new piece done in season; if not for your own sake, at least for mine; for, independent of my affection for you, you know I claim you as a countryman, and my pride of country is at stake."<sup>1</sup>

The concert was advertised, and the Polacca was in the programme; still it had no existence, except in the musician's soul. "*Have* you written that music?" said Thorwaldsen. "*Are* you crazy?" inquired the painter. But he would throw his arms around them, and laugh and jest, as if his musical reputation concerned everybody more than it did himself. The day before the concert his friends were in despair when they saw him prepare to go out after breakfast. "Have you written any of that music?" said they, entreatingly. "No, my dear friends, but I have it all here," replied he, playfully touching his forehead. They urged that the concert was to be the next day, and that the piece must be rehearsed. "I will do it this evening," said he. "You are an imprudent man," they replied; "the public of Rome will not bear such treatment even from a favorite like yourself; you will make a complete failure." He laughed, and coaxed them caressingly not to be troubled on his account. The evening was far spent when he returned. The artist, in anxious tones, asked, "Dear Ole, *have* you done anything about that music?" "No, I have not had time." "Well, do set about it this moment." "Oh, I cannot; I am so tired that I must go

<sup>1</sup> Norway and Denmark, it will be remembered, were formerly included under the same government.

directly to bed." In vain the artist remonstrated and entreated. A spirit of mischief had taken possession of the wayward minstrel. He plunged into bed, and soon pretended to be sound asleep. The young man had the habit of talking to himself ; and as he listened to the bass solo of the counterfeit sleeper, he muttered, "How *can* he go to sleep with nothing done about that music? It is more than I can comprehend. I wish I could feel as easy about it as he does." He retired to rest early, and as soon as he was fairly asleep, Ole sprang out of bed, lighted a candle, and stepped softly into an adjoining room, where he began to write down his music with prestissimo speed. The outline had long been in his mind, and new thoughts for the filling up came with a rush of inspiration. He wrote as fast as the pen could fly. At four o'clock the score for all the orchestral parts was written out. For his violin part he trusted entirely to his own wonderful memory. Having arranged all, he crept quietly back into bed. The artist, who was an early riser, soon began to stir. Ole breathed sonorously, as if he were in a deep sleep. "Still asleep!" murmured his friend: "as quietly as if the music were all ready for the orchestra. I wish we were safely through this evening." It was not long before his anxiety took a more active form. He began to shake the sleeper, saying, "Ole, do wake up, and try to do something about that music." But he obtained only the drowsy answer, "Oh I cannot, I am so very sleepy." Vexed and discouraged, the painter went to his easel, and said no more. At breakfast, Ole was full of fun and frolic ; but Thorwaldsen and the artist were some-



what impatient with what they deemed such thoughtless trifling with public expectation. "You will come to my concert to-night, will you not?" said the mischievous musician. In dismal tones, they replied, "No, Ole, we love you too well to witness your disgrace. Take it as lightly as you please; but you may be assured the public of Rome will not bear such treatment." "Oh, do come," pleaded the musician coaxingly, "just a little, *little* within the door; and then when I am disgraced, you can easily slip away." They would not promise, however, and he hurried off to keep his appointment with the orchestra. He had an excellent band of musicians, who could play the most difficult music with the slightest preparation. The rehearsal went off to his complete satisfaction, and he returned to his friends as gay as a lark. His apparent recklessness made them still more sad. The dreaded evening came. The house was crowded. Ole was full of that joyful confidence which genius is so apt to feel in effusions that have just burst freshly from its overflowing fountain. The orchestra delighted in the composition and played it with their hearts. The brilliancy of the theme and the uncommon beauty of the *cantabile* took the audience by surprise. The novelty and marvelous difficulty of the finale, in which the violin alone performs four distinct parts and keeps up a continuous shake through fifteen bars, completely electrified them. There was a perfect tempest of applause. In the midst of his triumph, the composer, looking as quiet and demure as possible, glanced toward the door. There stood Thorwaldsen and the artist. The latter had a trick of moving to-

bacco from one side of his mouth to the other when he was excited and pleased. It was now flying from cheek to cheek almost as rapidly as the violin bow through the continuous shake of fifteen bars.

The moment he left the stage his friends rushed into his arms, exclaiming, "When on earth did you do it? Only tell us that. Oh, it was too beautiful!" "Don't be so gay, my dear friends," replied he, with mock gravity; "you know the public of Rome won't bear such trifling. Why did you come to witness my disgrace?"

The next day all Rome was ringing with praises of the Norwegian violinist. They knew not which to applaud most, his genius or his superhuman strength in performing the four distinct parts on the violin at once, and keeping up the motion of his bow with such lightning swiftness, for so long a time. No person who has not tried it can conceive of the extreme difficulty of playing at once distinct parts on each of the strings. It requires muscles strong as iron, and elastic as india-rubber. Paganini had sufficient elasticity, but not sufficient strength. Ole Bull is the only man in the world that ever did it. When the Parisians first heard him produce this wonderful effect of four violins, it seemed so incredible, that a story was circulated that it was all a deception; that some other musician was playing two of the parts behind the scenes. Thus originated the charge of "charlatanry," so often and so unjustly repeated.

The Polacca brought its composer a brilliant reputation at once; and musical critics were obliged to con-

tent themselves with saying that it was not written in the right measure for a Polacca.

In May he went from Rome directly to Paris, The doors of the Grand Opéra were now open to him, and he gave several concerts there, making some provincial tours in the intervals. From his second appearance at the Grand Opéra dates Jules Janin's criticism written for the *Journal des Débats*. Wergeland says:—

In spite of the half ludicrous self-assertion of its author, and the unnecessary prominence given to his own personality, it is a very happy piece of art criticism. Jules Janin had a wonderful power of making other people see, hear, and feel as he saw, heard, and felt. His opinions became the opinions of the world. As if with a wizard's wand, he made a fame, and it was only when he tried to unmake one that his own vulnerable points were exposed. In the present case, he hit most happily upon just those features in Ole Bull's genius and character, which were sure to win sympathy—the simplicity, the brightness, the sweet innocence, which in his music suddenly rises from the chaos of tumultuous passion, and the naïveté, generosity, and warm devotion, which in his personal intercourse with men were so singularly blended with his fierce hatred of all intrigue and malice.

In Norway we read this criticism with great delight. It was the legal rite duly performed. The last anxiety disappeared. Ole Bull was now in the eyes of all the world the great genius, the perfect artist.



Jules Janin's criticism (which would only be marred by translation) was as follows :<sup>1</sup> —

M. OLE B. BULL.

Ce jeune sauvage, qui nous est venu l'an passé des glaces de la Norwège, son Stradivarius à la main, s'est fait entendre pour la seconde fois à l'opéra, lundi passé. C'est tout à fait le grand musicien que je vous avais prédit il y a six mois. Il y a tant de larmes et tant de mélancolie dans ce noble instrument ! Il y a tant d'énergie et de vigueur et tant de grace sous cet archet de fer ! Il chante, il pleure, il se passionne ; tantôt il élève la voix au dessus des cors et des trombones ; tantôt il soupire si doucement qu'on dirait une harpe éolienne ! C'est un musicien qui n'a pas eu de maître. C'est un violon qui n'appartient à aucune école. C'est quelque chose de naïf et d'inspiré et d'une puissance incroyable. On a beaucoup parlé de M. Paganini et de sa quatrième corde. Ils s'étaient fait annoncer, l'une portant l'autre, par toutes les voix de la renommée. Ils étaient venus, la quatrième corde tendue outre mesure, et celui qui en devait jouer, aussi mal peigné qu'on peut l'être quand on le fait exprès. Eh bien ! je ne sais pas, si le succès de M. Bull, le Norvégien, n'eût pas été aussi grand que le succès de l'Italien et de sa quatrième corde, s'il avait pris soin de s'entourer du puissant charlatanisme de son confrère. Mais, que voulez vous ? La Norwège est une bonne fille bien simple et bien honnête, qui ne met

<sup>1</sup> Ole Bull used to mention a personal grievance which Janin had against Paganini : the latter was asked to play for the poor of Janin's native town and refused.

pas de fard. Elle arrive tout simplement et jette au dehors naturellement et sans efforts tout ce qu'elle a dans l'âme et dans le cœur ! M. Ole B. Bull est un de ces artistes pleins d'ignorance, de naïveté, et de bonne foi, qui ne demandent pas mieux que de s'abandonner à leur belle et bonne nature en plein jour, en plein air et en toute liberté. C'est un honnête jeune homme sans charlatanisme, qui ignore le grand art Italien de préparer un succès de longue main. Depuis le premier jour ou je l'entendis à l'opéra, en toute admiration, je l'avoue, le hasard me l'a fait entendre souvent çà et là, sur toutes les grandes routes et sur tous les théâtres de province, et toujours cependant j'ai retrouvé le même talent, la même inspiration passionnée et le même enthousiasme naïf et plein de cœur. Un jour dans une auberge de Rouen, j'ai été réveillé par un adagio mélancolique et tendre, c'était le violon d'Ole Bull. Une autre fois dans un cabaret de grande route un plaintif andante m'est venu surprendre, assis au-devant de la porte, sous le bouchon qui servait d'enseigne, c'était un andante de mon violon favori. Il a été toute ma providence poétique. L'été passé, dans cette ennuyeuse ville de Dieppe, pleine d'Anglais ennuyés et d'Anglaises d'antichambre couvertes d'un voile vert, Ole Bull m'a consolé de la mer de Dieppe, cette horrible mer qui rend malades les gens bien portants. Même je le vois encore, accompagné d'une façon si burlesque par la société dite philharmonique de cette honnête ville, à ce point, que Meyerbeer qui était là, ne pouvant supporter plus longtemps cet accompagnement barbare, est allé se jeter dans la mer en tenant ses oreilles à deux mains.

J'ai donc conservé un tendre souvenir pour ce grand artiste que j'ai trouvé ainsi sur ma route, pour en charmer les ennuis. Ce n'est pas celui-là qui s'enfermerait dans sa chambre comme un voleur, pour tirer de son violon les plus doux accords ; au contraire, il jetait sa pensée à qui voulait l'entendre, comme on jette sa petite monnaie aux pauvres du chemin ; ce n'est pas celui-là qui mettrait à son violon une avare sourdine ; au contraire, il n'était jamais plus joyeux que lorsqu'il y avait foule autour de lui pour l'entendre, pour l'applaudir et pour pleurer gratis ; aussi a-t-il recueilli partout sur son passage, sinon beaucoup d'or, du moins d'honorables sympathies. Les Anglais vagabonds n'ont pas été à son concert, mais les jeunes gens y sont venus, et les plus pauvres, car c'était ce pauvre musicien lui-même qui ouvrait sa porte et qui disait ; entrez ! sans exiger qu'on prit son billet à la porte. Voilà comment il faut soutenir la dignité de l'instrument que vous a départi le ciel. Il faut savoir donner quelques leçons de générosité à ces villes égoïstes de la province qui ne savent pas que c'est un devoir pour elles d'encourager un grand musicien qui passe. Il faut savoir donner pour rien les nobles plaisirs que la foule ne sait pas acheter ; on revient pauvre, il est vrai, de ces parages, mais qu'importe, puisqu'on revient honoré et honorable ? On n'a pas le revenu et les sept millions de Paganini ; mais qu'importe ? M. Baillot à votre retour vous tend la main et vous dit : Mon frère ! Et puis n'est ce donc rien que d'avoir le droit de revenir à Paris et de trouver toujours l'opéra ouvert, et d'avoir à ses ordres cet admirable orchestre de M. Habeneck, et de venir là sans saluer trop



bas recueillir des marques unanimes d'estime et d'admiration ?

Jules Janin always called Ole Bull "mon sauvage." This was because, when making his first appearance at the Grand Opéra, his last step at the side of the stage, before coming in view of the public, was a misstep. He stumbled on a projecting piece of framework, and was thrown so violently forward that, to save himself from falling headlong, he was obliged to run out. It was as unconventional and awkward a manner of saluting the public as can be imagined, and especially unfortunate in that it was a Parisian audience, who have so keen a sense of the ridiculous. Nor was this all. In the midst of the finale of the "Polacca Guerriera," the A string snapped. Ole Bull turned deathly pale. Monsieur Habeneck immediately offered his violin to the artist ; but he dared not use any instrument but his own. With the courage of despair, he transposed the remainder of the piece, and finished it on three strings. The strain and tension necessary for the accomplishment of such a feat were appreciated by Meyerbeer, who occupied Jules Janin's box and witnessed this incident, which others could not believe, although they heard the snap of the string, because of the brilliant and successful conclusion of the performance. As Meyerbeer's

voice rang out above the thunder of applause, Ole Bull said it seemed to him like a voice from heaven.

In 1879, while performing Paganini's "Second Concerto," in the midst of the Adagio the E string broke. The accompanists were startled, but the movement was finished without a change of reading, harmonics being substituted for the high notes of the E string. As they left the stage, Mr. Maurice Strakosch reminded Ole Bull, who stood over his violin-case in the dressing-room, that the audience were calling vociferously. "But I can't go out, man, until I put on my E string!" "*Mon Dieu!*" exclaimed the impresario, "did it really break? I could not believe my ears."

Ole Bull used to say, "If you have the audience under your spell, never break it by a change of instruments, even for a broken string;" and on no occasion was he unnerved, even when a wretched orchestral accompaniment ruined his effects, intentionally or otherwise; but, as he said, the tortures he suffered under such circumstances were "the tortures of the damned."

In the summer of 1836 he was married. He had felt the most affectionate attachment for Madame Villeminot and her granddaughter from his first acquaintance with them. He was very sen-

sible of the debt of gratitude which he owed this motherly friend, and felt that his life had been saved by her care when he had no one else to whom he could turn for help. She thus writes him in 1833:—

Try to be careful of yourself on this long journey, if not for your own sake, for the sake of us, who feel so deeply interested in your welfare. Shall I confess to you, sir, that, since the day of your departure, the hours seem years to us? I can hardly realize that it is but one month since you left us.

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She goes on to assure him of her esteem and sincere attachment, begging him to remember her kindly advice that he should be economical. In May, 1834, he writes:—

Dear Félicie, I cannot write a letter to your grandmother without sending you a friendly word to thank you for your letter forwarded to me from Geneva. . . . I should have returned before this to Paris, but I would not go back until I had made my reputation and some money, to carry out my plans; but Fortune did not smile upon me at first. It is better with me now. . . . In Bologna I performed a concerto of mine with full orchestra, the execution of which seemed impossible to those who heard it: My style is much more animated and more refined than formerly. . . . Please write me at once, and tell me everything—how Mamma is, as I am in the greatest anxiety about you all. If I can be



of any service to you, dispose of me, and you will give me the greatest pleasure. I will even leave Italy if your welfare requires it, and come to you. . . . I shall stay here one month longer. What a beautiful country Italy is ! Speak sincerely to me, keep for me your esteem and friendship, and believe me always your true friend and obedient servant,

OLE BULL.

The letters following this were written after his engagement. During a serious illness of Madame Villeminot, he was called to her bedside. She told him how much she desired the protection of a loving friend for her grandchild, whom she feared she was soon to leave ; that she believed them adapted to secure each other's happiness, and desired to see them betrothed. His letters during his engagement and married life express his tender, passionate devotion to wife and children. Some time after their marriage he writes : " The word *home* has above all others the greatest charm for me."

When a young man in the first flush of triumph and adulation, he suggested mutual study and work, that their heart and home life might year by year become the richer, more helpful to each other and those whom they influenced.

In speaking of his early ideal, we may also allude here to his later life ; how he brought cheer and a tender thought of others ever to his home.

He was generously appreciative of all practical helps. His strong, impulsive nature was balanced by a kindly readiness to yield to the desire and happiness of another. His spirit and sense of justice would not brook personal narrowness of feeling, but a direct and dispassionate opposition commanded his respect, often his approval, always his consideration.

A true, open-hearted friend might safely venture on severe criticism, and his love would bear the test even if this was sometimes cruel as regarded his motives. He readily forgave a wrong to himself, though an injury to a friend was not forgotten if forgiven. His faults and failings were always open and manifest, but his gentle courtesy in his most intimate relations, unfailing when most needed, cannot be told.

However trying or commonplace the circumstances of his life might be, his resources of thought, aspiration, and work gave him hours of experience in each day which transformed for him and those in sympathy with him the hard realities of life,

“Clothing the palpable and familiar  
With golden exhalations of the dawn.”

After a series of six concerts in Lyons in the early part of the year of 1836, he had a severe illness, which nearly cost him his life. On his

recovery he hastened back to Paris to play at the Italian Opera. He had been promised the theatre, but saw an announcement in the papers of Thalberg's concerts to be given there. He hurried to Rossini, who was one of the directors, and asked him what it meant. "I am sorry that it is not in my power to help you," said Rossini; "the government has the entire control in this matter. Have you a letter from Metternich?" Thalberg, by the by, had brought a letter from the great Austrian to the Paris authorities. "No," was the reply. "Then follow my advice and go to England this very day. This will be a very favorable time for you there."

It may be said here that Rossini's kindness and courtesy were as constant as the charm of his ready repartee and wit in conversation. Ole Bull always delighted to recall reminiscences of him.

The violinist determined to follow Rossini's advice and went to London. Mr. Laporte, the director of the Italian Opera, with whom he was soon on good terms, promised him the theatre, and the orchestra under the direction of Costa, for his concerts. This, however, stirred the bad blood of Mori, the first violin of the orchestra, who intrigued against Ole Bull, describing him to Costa and the critics as a mere charlatan, an



impudent and stupid imitator of Paganini. He went even further. When the time for the first rehearsal was fixed, he contrived very adroitly that Ole Bull's notice should read two o'clock, while the orchestra were called for twelve o'clock. His object was to give the orchestra the impression that Ole Bull was indifferent to their convenience, and by the long detention to arouse their indignation. This partially succeeded. Ole Bull felt that there were influences at work against him, and determined not to be wholly unprepared, although he did not know on whom to fix his suspicion. He invited a number of friends and musical critics to the rehearsal, and a considerable audience had assembled at the hour. When he himself arrived he found but a remnant of the orchestra left, and no leader. Where was Monsieur Costa? Where was Monsieur Laporte? The notification for rehearsal in his hand read distinctly two o'clock. The violinist rushed to the cashier's office, and seizing the man in his strong arms, compelled him to go and announce to the audience that M. Costa had notified Monsieur Ole Bull that the hour of rehearsal was two o'clock. With violin in hand Ole Bull then said: "You must either think, gentlemen, that I do not need an accompaniment, or that you are unable to play one. I can only accept your in-

tention as a compliment, and express my thanks in our mutual language — that of tone."

Excited as he was, he played his "Quartetto a Violino Solo," and won the hearty applause of those present. He then played "God save the King" on four strings, and the house resounded with shouts. Some persons in the street heard the noise and rushed in to learn what it all meant. Among them were Lord Burgesh and Moscheles. The members of the orchestra present now felt chagrined, and offered to accompany him, but there was no leader. Lord Burgesh urged Moscheles to take the bâton, which he did, applauded warmly by the audience; but only a few bars had been played when Costa rushed out upon him with bitter taunts and insults. Pale with anger Ole Bull approached the director, and expressed to him his indignation that he had failed to perceive the generous service Moscheles was rendering them both. M. Laporte, who understood that the young artist's victory over this intrigue was sure to win him favor, now exerted himself to make peace. At the next rehearsal the orchestra did their duty, and the house was crowded at the concert, which was a brilliant success. Ole Bull writes to Madlle. Villemot, May 20, 1836: —

To-morrow is the day for my first concert. I have

to-day had the third rehearsal with full orchestra. It is impossible to tell you all the intrigues I have had to encounter. I had everybody against me, even the director; but the papers have spoken much about the base treatment I have received, and everybody who sees me, even at a distance, now raises his hat. Thalberg gives a morning concert in the King's Theatre the same day; but few tickets are sold. He and De Beriot were surprised at the large sale for my concert.

Again, May 24, 1836, he writes:—

Dearest Félicie, Victoria!!! we have won! I never had a greater success, hardly so great, as that of last Saturday night. Wreaths, bouquets, and applause! Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache sang, but Grisi did not sing as promised.<sup>1</sup>

In spite of all intrigues the journals have pronounced me one of the first violinists of the world. To-morrow I play for the Duke of Devonshire. . . . I have also agreed to play for the Philharmonic Society. Fearnley goes to Christiania Tuesday next. He came to my concert, and was almost crazy at the *furore* I made.

Two days later, May 26, 1836, he writes:—

Yesterday I played for the Duke of Devonshire; Rubini also sang. The duke said that I had performed the miracle of endowing the violin with a soul. Many

<sup>1</sup> Mori had influenced Madame Grisi, but Rubini and Lablache had stood by him. "What are you reading? I know the handwriting," said Lablache, looking over Grisi's note the very hour of the concert. "Infamous! but never mind; play as you did at the rehearsal, and be sure the audience will forget the rest of us."



of the first nobility of England were present, and the ladies were much moved.

The Duke of Devonshire was especially fond of Rubini, and Ole Bull used to say that he had never received a more delicate compliment than that paid him by the duke when he turned to Rubini and said, as the last tones of the violin died away: "You never sang more delightfully, Rubini!" Mr. James T. Fields once asked in what respect Rubini excelled other tenors, to which Ole Bull replied: "He began where others ended."

One of the chief triumphs which Ole Bull won in London, in 1836, was on the occasion of a Philharmonic concert in which he appeared with Malibran and Thalberg. So great was his success that his concerts afterward were crowded, one audience at the King's Theatre numbering three thousand people, an unprecedented success that season. He writes in August, 1836:—

I have just presented some souvenirs of regard to Rubini, Tamburini, Lablache, and Madame Assandri, who have assisted me gratuitously in my concerts here. They are the best people in the world, and immensely talented. They have told me to command them at all times, and as often as I please.

The following criticisms of his first appearance in London are taken from the *Times*, which said, in its issue of May 23, 1836:—

Mr. Ole B. Bull, the Norwegian violinist, made his first public essay in this country, on Saturday evening, at this theatre [King's Theatre]. A more completely successful performance of the kind we have never attended. He played three pieces — a grand concerto in three movements, allegro, adagio, and rondo ; a quartette for one violin ; and a grand warlike Polish movement introduced by a recitative and adagio. His varieties of movement seem almost unlimited ; and much as Paganini has done, this artist has certainly opened a new field on that instrument. His style is essentially different, and, like that of every truly great master, is of his own formation. Perhaps his most remarkable characteristic is the quiet and unpretending manner in which he produces all his great effects. There was no trick, no violent gesture, nor any approach to the *ad captandum* school. It seemed so easy, that to those not acquainted with the mechanical difficulties he mastered it was not easy to comprehend that anything extraordinary had been done. In long arpeggio passages and others made up of rapid and minute divisions, his bow scarcely seemed to move on the string ; his hand, too, was almost motionless, yet our ear was charmed with a succession of distinct and sparkling notes, which kept the whole audience fixed in mute and almost breathless attention. His command of the instrument, from the top to the bottom of the scale — and he has a scale of his own of three complete octaves on each string — is absolutely perfect ; in passing from one extreme of it to the other, however rapidly, he never missed a note. His tone on the fourth string is

so beautiful, that even Nicholson's flute, when a response occurred in the accompaniment, was thrown into the shade. His "Quartette," in the ordinary mode of playing, would seem impossible; but he distinctly made out chords of three notes with the bow, and produced the fourth with his finger. This movement made such an impression on the audience that an encore was called for, instead of which Mr. Bull, as a mark of respect, which he probably thought appropriate, favored us with our National Anthem. With all our loyalty, we would have preferred hearing his "Quartette" once more. The applause he received was unbounded, as little forced, and as sincere, as any we have ever heard bestowed. Mr. Bull is still a young man, his age not being more than 26 or 27, and his appearance, on the whole, prepossessing. The performance of Saturday was, perhaps, as wonderful for the specimen afforded of the power of the instrument as for that of the player. . . . It should be mentioned that the audience included nearly all the distinguished members of the musical profession now in town, whose judgment, as they applauded most cordially, is the proper ordeal of a musical reputation. . . .

The artists appearing with him were Rubini, Tamburini, and Lablache, with Mdle. Assandri.

The *Times* of Thursday, June 2, 1836, referring to Paganini's variations to "Nel cor non più mi sento," says: —

This air, with variations, is the first instance in which Ole Bull has challenged a direct comparison with



Paganini, by playing a movement of his composition, every note of which, as delivered by that great master, is fresh in the recollection of the musical audiences of this metropolis. To say that he bore up manfully under the comparison is sterling praise, and he deserves it. His arpeggio passages had less tone than Paganini, but were equal to him in neatness, rapidity, and distinctness ; and in his pizzicato, in alternate use of bow and finger, difference of effect, if any, was extremely small. . . . His second performance, on the whole, fully sustains his reputation. . . .

The *Times* of Thursday, June 16, 1836, remarks : —

Ole Bull gave his third, announced also as his last, concert yesterday evening ; but it was so good and so highly successful, that we are quite sure that more concerts will be called for, and that they must be granted. A more perfect performance can scarcely be imagined. To the confidence which, from the first, Ole Bull possessed in his own resources is now added a confidence also in the public — a persuasion that he is thoroughly understood and estimated, and that conviction has evidently enabled him to surpass all he hitherto has done. All pieces which he played last night were of his own composition, and have been heard before in public. They were his “Concerto,” in which he introduces his inimitable arpeggios ; his “Adagio Religioso,” with the movement describing the “Lamentation of a Mother for the loss of her Child ;” his “Polacca Guerriera,” a most stirring movement, which he

played at the Philharmonic Society ; and his "Fantasia Solo." The great charm, perhaps, consisted in the purity of style with which the whole was given. It was all his own — new, and consistent, and beautiful ; not an atom of charlatanism in it ; nor was there any imitation of any other great master to be detected. . . .

Ole Bull now went to Paris, married, as stated above, and returned with his bride to London. The little Alexandrine Félicie Villeminot had developed into a woman of rare beauty. Her oval face and fine features were thoroughly Parisian, while the sparkling brilliancy of her large black eyes betrayed her Spanish blood.

In September a series of musical festivals was to be given in the cities of York, Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool. The managers wished to engage Ole Bull, but his demand for £800 was thought too high. They therefore opened negotiations with Mesdames Malibran and Grisi, who asked £2,000. Falling back on Ole Bull, they came an hour too late. In connection with Bochsá, the celebrated harpist, he had engaged a company for a tour in the United Kingdom.

Nothing remained but to engage Malibran for the festival. She was not well, but one night in Manchester she determined to surpass herself. Singing a duet by Mercadante with Caradori

Allan, a soprano who held a high trill for a long time with great effect, Malibran forced a tone two notes higher, holding it with so much strength and for so long a time that the audience were astonished. The desperate effort proved fatal to the great vocalist. Hemorrhage followed, and resulted in death a few days later.

The manager had called upon her the day after the concert, and expressed the hope that she would soon be well enough to sing again, to which she replied: "Do you think me like one of your English boxers, only to be put on my feet and go on again with my blows and knocks? Bête!" She once said to Ole Bull when he tried to persuade her to guard her health and strength: "The public will kill you, either by their neglect or their exactions."

Feeling, as he did, an admiration approaching idolatry for Malibran, her death was a most painful shock to him. He writes: —

Yesterday the papers announced the death of Malibran. Poor woman! After having worked so hard for the public, which was often ungrateful, she dies the victim of her own success. . . . I cannot realize it. A woman gifted with a soul of fire, full of the highest passion, a ravishing singer, her dramatic talent and declamation — ah! I remember how I wept in Bologna when I saw her as Desdemona in "Othello."



But the festival must go on, and the management sent for Ole Bull to fill Malibran's place. His own concerts had to be postponed, and in consideration of this and their desire for his services he was offered £800 for one night in Liverpool, which he accepted.

But, as Wergeland says, it seemed as if Malibran had asked a chevalier to cross with her the river Styx, for he came near sharing her fate. The hall was large, the orchestral accompaniment too strong, and his violin could be heard only when he played *fortissimo*. In performing the "Polacca," his exertion was so great that he burst a blood-vessel, and his coat had to be cut from him. The Duke of Devonshire, hearing of his illness, sent his carriage to fetch him to Chatsworth, where he spent some quiet days, and recovered sufficiently to continue his concert tour.

He thus writes of Chatsworth, under date of October 13, 1836:—

Dear Félicie, . . . I arrived here Saturday evening, at nine o'clock. The duke insisted upon quiet and rest, that I should be quite at liberty ; in short, he is as amiable and good as possible. But feeling that it would please him, I took my violin the same evening and played until midnight, in spite of my intense suffering. I was obliged the next day to write to Bochsa that I was so ill that the journey to Brighton would kill me.

The duke cares for me in a thousand ways, and has absolutely forbidden me to play. Many of the first aristocracy of England are here, and I might be taken for a prince, so much consideration and politeness do I receive. What magnificence! It is the most splendid place I know. Since my convalescence, the duke has shown me all about his domain. We went on foot. I spoke to him of our marriage. . . . He asked me if I had given you the ring which he had presented me, and wished me to do so. . . . My health is better, except that my chest feels worn out, but I hope to be well soon. How long does the time seem that deprives me of seeing you! I embrace you very tenderly. . . .

At Chatsworth, at the duke's town residence, and at Holland House, he met the famous men and women of the time. Among them was Thomas Moore, who not only sang for him his own songs, but also wrote out and sang for him the Irish popular melodies and ballads which he was to use in his concerts.

In sixteen months' time, Ole Bull gave two hundred and seventy-four concerts in the United Kingdom. His exertions during those years often threatened to break down his health. He suffered from nervous attacks and great depression at such times. His success everywhere, however, was of the same character which he had achieved in the capitals, and which has already been told at length.

He now decided to visit Germany, and, stopping *en route* in Paris, made the acquaintance of Paganini. His delight at this was so great that even the recollection of it in later years made others feel his sensations as he recounted them, especially his first meeting with the great Italian. Walking on the Boulevard one morning, he met Sind, the banker, who had just proposed to introduce him to Paganini, when they saw in the distance a strange and striking figure, which could be no other than that of the great violinist himself. As they met, he greeted Ole Bull, without presentation, so familiarly and kindly that the latter at first thought that he must have been mistaken for some well-known friend. But, thrilled and awed as he was in the presence of the renowned *maestro*, he could not help gratefully accepting his gracious and hearty words. Paganini insisted upon their returning with him to his lodgings, and spoke much to Ole Bull of his illness and troubles, and the persecution of the critics; in short, he treated him as if he were an old and confidential friend. The surprise of Sind at this cordiality may be imagined; but Ole Bull could only tell him that it was really the first time he had spoken with Paganini, and hurry away to live over again in the solitude of his own thoughts this memorable meeting. He afterwards learned



that Paganini knew more of him and his work than he supposed, as he spoke familiarly of Ole Bull's performances to others, praising his individuality of style, and foretelling his brilliant career. When or where Paganini had heard him he never found out. The sympathy he felt was too sensitive to permit him to intrude his own thoughts upon the master, who was always inclined to unbosom himself of his troubles to him; nor could he bring himself to ask the one thing he most desired — a sight of the famous violin.

Paganini never had a more observant or critical listener. Those familiar with the usual rendering of his compositions must have marked the difference in Ole Bull's performance of them. He strove to give the fine phrasing, the varied quality of tone, which he felt himself so fortunate in having heard from the composer. In Nice, in 1874, Count Cessole, the friend in whose arms Paganini died, gave Ole Bull a letter to Paganini's son, requesting him to show him the manuscript of an unpublished concerto of his father's, adding that he was the only person capable of doing it justice. Unfortunately, the opportunity of making the journey was denied Ole Bull that winter, and it never offered itself later.

After leaving Paris concerts were given in Brussels and Courtray. At the latter place the

violinist was royally entertained by his host, Mons. Vermeulen, a passionate lover of music. A number of the principal citizens met him outside the town and escorted him to his destination. His coming was regarded as a *fête*, and he was received by the public at his concert with every expression of delighted admiration. His host gave him a magnificent banquet, and the citizens vied with each other in doing him honor.

Learning that Mons. Vermeulen, who was an amateur collector, was extremely desirous of obtaining one of his violins, Ole Bull made him happy by consenting to part with his Guarnerius. Tarisio, in Paris, supplied its place with another, a famous instrument, a Joseph Guarnerius labeled 1742, which Ole Bull used as his principal concert violin for the next twenty-five or thirty years. It is now in the possession of his son, Mr. Alexander Bull.

In December, and January, 1838, Ole Bull gave six concerts in the Stadt Theatre in Hamburg. When he left on the 7th of January, a deputation was sent to ask him to return. His reply, dated the 9th from Neumünster, stated that his route would be disarranged by his return, but that he could not hesitate for a moment as to his pleasure and duty; so, after one more concert in Neumünster, he returned to Hamburg and played in

the great Apollo Hall. The large proceeds from this concert he gave to the charitable institutions of that city.

An extract from a letter to his wife (from Lübeck, January 23, 1838), will show how constant and fatiguing were his labors at this time:—

I have been traveling and giving concerts every day without interruption for some time. I have the satisfaction of feeling that the result was never better. I played six times in Hamburg (the last time for charity), and every seat was filled an hour before the concert. I left in the morning for Kiel, where I arrived early the next day. I started at once for the rehearsal, although I had had no sleep during the night, after which I went to my lodgings, dined, and dressed for the concert. After the concert I rode in the coach to Schleswig. On my arrival there in the morning—rehearsal and then concert. Left Schleswig about midnight and returned to Kiel, arriving the following morning, where a rehearsal and concert awaited me again. I then went to Neumünster and called on K.'s uncle. . . . I was so weary that I could not help sleeping the whole day. The next day I played for the poor at Neumünster. . . .

I have bought an English traveling carriage. K. and I sleep like two kings in it. . . . We are to start in a moment, the postilion is impatient. I have to be in Schwerin to-night, as I have accepted an invitation from the court; the princess has promised me a letter of introduction to her sister, the Empress of Russia.

I have given one concert in Altona, and am to give



two in Lübeck to-morrow, and two in Schwerin; then to Rostock, and Königsberg; and, in a month's time, I shall be in St. Petersburg. Wherever I have given concerts I have played to large audiences and received double prices. . . .

My dear, be patient! Two months only, and we shall be reunited.

Again, he writes from Berlin, January 31, 1838:—

You will undoubtedly have received my letter from Lübeck some days ago. I came almost against my will, and quite unexpectedly, to Berlin. It happened in this way: While in Kiel I received an invitation from the court of Mecklenberg-Schwerin (the Princess of Orleans is a sister of the grand duke), to play there; and knowing that I intended visiting Russia, the grand duchess promised me a letter of introduction to her sister the empress. After writing my last letter to you in Lübeck I started for Schwerin. Although the distance is short (we left at one o'clock in the morning), we did not arrive there until five o'clock the next morning, as we lost our way on account of the heavy snow-fall. But that did not tire me much. I lay on furs, made up comfortably as a bed.

After the rehearsal, and some hours after my arrival, the grand duke called and thanked me for coming to Schwerin. One could not meet a more charming person. At night the court was present. After the performance the duke came to my dressing-room with tears in his eyes. He invited me to the palace the follow-

ing morning, and said, "My wife was much moved during your whole performance; she *must* see and talk with you." The next day I had an audience that lasted three quarters of an hour. . . . The duchess told me she had just written to her father, the King of Prussia, of the sensation I had made, and asked me to go to Berlin and play there, suggesting that it might be of benefit to me in Russia. . . . She asked me what she could do for me. . . . Her husband was also exceedingly kind. After the concert I was awakened by a serenade. The next day the ducal family attended the rehearsal; in the evening the duchess gave me letters to Berlin and Russia, and at the conclusion of the performance the orchestra presented me with a laurel wreath.

He went to Berlin and made his visit to the intendant, who was offensively patronizing, and appointed an hour the day following for another call at the Opera House. Ole Bull came. "Where is your violin?" "In the case." "And where is the case?" "At the hotel." "But did I not ask you to play for me?" "Excuse me, sir, I could not think you were in earnest. I play either for honor or for money, and in this case neither is in question." "But it is impossible for me to present you to his majesty without having heard you." "If the request of the grand duchess is not a sufficient recommendation to his majesty her father, I am quite con-

tent to leave the city," — and he did leave Berlin at once.

He next gave four concerts in four days in Königsberg, and, being crowned with laurel, which he tried to decline, he responded by playing "Heil dir ein Siegenkranz." In Riga he gave four concerts in five days. In St. Petersburg he had some difficulties to encounter with another intendant; but shortly after his arrival he played at the Imperial Theatre. The empress, the imperial family, and the court, were present. On his entrance he was warmly received, and the "Polacca Guerriera" created the greatest enthusiasm. The applause constantly interrupted the orchestra, and the musicians were obliged to wait patiently the pleasure of the audience. This applause Ole Bull acknowledged, when called before the curtain, by playing the Russian National Hymn. This created another furor, and he was recalled again and again, the applause being led by the imperial family. A critic wrote: —

I never witnessed such a universal ovation; Ole Bull's tones have the power of melting the hearts even of the envious. When he commenced, he played to both enemies and friends, but he ended by playing to friends only. He has, by his personal worth, made himself universally beloved here.

He gave three concerts in the Great Theatre to



crowded houses, although the usual prices were quadrupled. He played also in private for the empress, who presented him with a ring—an emerald in a setting of one hundred and forty diamonds. The emperor sent him an autograph letter. Being invited to Moscow he gave five concerts there, and received many jewels from the nobility of the city, among them a valuable ring from the Princess Galizin.

Here the sad tidings of his father's death reached him. He writes:—

A letter from my brother Edward describes most touchingly my poor father's death! He says he spoke often of the anticipated delight of his dear Ole's return, after so many years of separation. He read all the poems and criticisms, and knew that I was on my way home, with my dear Félicie. He constantly heard divine music that made him forget his sufferings. When dying, he spoke of me, and his face was beautiful to behold.

I am so sad! Such fears! Ever the thought haunts me that I may not see you and our child again. . . .

To-morrow I play a quartette of Beethoven's, a quartette of Mozart's, a quintette of Gebel's, and a composition of my own. . . . God protect you both!

His grand concerts in St. Petersburg were given in a hall that would seat five thousand people, and it was filled at every performance.

He now went through Finland, giving concerts in the chief towns, and thence to Stockholm. Being in haste to reach home, he resolved not to give any concert there. It was hoped, however, that he might be induced to change his mind by inviting him to play for the benefit of the sufferers from the fire in Wermeland, some of whom were then in Stockholm collecting subscriptions. He presented five hundred dollars to the sufferers, but declined to play. His presence at the palace was requested, and the king, during the interview, asked him to remain and play, saying that he made the request as King of Norway. He could not well refuse to comply with a request so put, and, notwithstanding his anxiety to hurry home, he consented to give five concerts, the last of which netted five thousand dollars. He played at the palace twice. The "Polacca Guerriera" so moved the old warrior king, to whose ears martial music was ever the sweetest, that he rose from his seat, and remained standing until the piece was finished.

The following incident occurred during Ole Bull's first audience with Bernadotte. The king remarked that he had written to the Emperor of Russia, that he, too, had his Poles, the Norwegians; probably forgetting, for the moment, the nationality of his listener. Ole Bull replied with

warmth: "Can your majesty mention a single instance in which my countrymen have not proved themselves law-abiding and loyal subjects?" "Your remark, sir, is out of place." "If my remark is out of place, your majesty, I myself am out of place, and will take my leave." "Remain, sir!" cried Bernadotte, extending his hand with a commanding gesture. "No, sire! I will see if a *Norseman* is free in the palace of the King of Sweden!" and the artist bowed low as he retired. Instantly the cloud lifted, and, with a winning smile and courteous words, the king said, "I pray you, sir, to remain; it is the duty of a prince to hear the opinions of all his people."

Before Ole Bull left, Bernadotte offered him the Vasa order, which he declined, saying that a handkerchief or a button from his majesty's coat would be a precious memento of this visit. When the king found that both order and jewels were firmly declined, in parting with Ole Bull he told him that at all times he would be admitted directly to his presence, and concluded, "You will not refuse an old man's blessing" — which the violinist knelt to receive.

The order in brilliants was sent later to Ole Bull in Christiania, through his friend, Count Wedel-Jarlsberg, with a message from the king requesting the artist to accept the gift, that the



world might know his king appreciated and honored genius.

The artist arrived with his family in Christiania, the capital of Norway, July 8, 1838, having gone directly there from Stockholm. The people were impatient to hear him, but he felt it necessary to take a fortnight's rest after his long and fatiguing journey. The students hastened meantime to greet him before his public appearance, and on the 19th of July a dinner was given him by the foremost men of the country. Poems were written and read, his portrait was wreathed in flowers, and he himself was at last crowned with laurel. Wergeland says of his arrival and concert: —

Business even was dull while awaiting him. The talk was only of Ole Bull. The people had evidently thought of him as walking about with diamond buttons on his coat and surrounded by a sort of triumphal halo; and it was a surprise when he at last stood before us, exactly the same as of old, the same modest, unassuming man, with the same kindly smile and the piercing glance. Before his concert he made a visit to his old teacher, Paulsen, who had been unfortunate and now lay upon a sick-bed. He played for him until the old man was happy, and when he left he took care to insure his permanent comfort.

Of the first concert it is enough to say that the great expectations of the people were not disappointed. Wergeland continues: —

The greatest marvel of all was that he brought Norway home to the Norsemen. Most people knew the folk-songs and dances, but were ashamed to admire them. Lifted by him into their confidence and love, these homely melodies suddenly began to gleam like stars, and the people came to feel that they too had jewels of their own.

Ole Bull's name was now known in every part of Norway. Among the strangers who came to Christiania to hear him was the giant, the engineer Engebret Soot. Wild and passionate as he was, music could subdue him like a child, and his family used to resort to this means of taming his Berserk nature. He had taken a short respite from his work and gone as fast as possible by carriage to Christiania, but arrived only at night after Ole Bull, weary from the first concert and its triumphs, had fallen fast asleep.

There is a knocking at his door, which, repeated, is at last answered: "Who's there?" The door is already opened. "Good evening, Ole Bull! It is I — Engebret Soot. I am come too late for your concert, and I want you to get up and play for me now." "I am really too tired. I — it is impossible, — besides" — But by the light of a candle which his unexpected visitor has succeeded in finding and lighting, the violinist sees before him a man of giant size grandly pro-

portioned. "I have traveled ninety miles to-day to hear you." "Yes, but to-morrow" — "I must be in Aremark. You *must* play for me now, Ole Bull."

They exchange looks; they are physically the two best developed men in Norway; they understand each other, and Ole Bull takes his violin. Sitting on the edge of the bed he plays and, in his turn, subdues and controls his formidable friend, moving him at will to tears or laughter; but he himself is not permitted to sleep until he has given his one auditor more than the audience of the evening had heard.

One of the most beautiful of the Norwegian poems addressed to Ole Bull was written by the famous poet Welhaven under the following circumstances. Crushed by the death of his betrothed he was leading a life of entire seclusion, and his friends were fearful that his depression would seriously affect his mind. He was persuaded to hear Ole Bull; the music brought him the relief of tears, and moved him to write this grateful tribute to his friend.<sup>1</sup>

At the request of deputations Ole Bull now gave concerts in the principal towns along the coast and in Bergen. The people of his native city received him warmly, and festivities in his

<sup>1</sup> This poem, with a translation, will be found in the Appendix.



honor were the order of the day. During his visit there he composed "The Mountains of Norway," the last piece played by him at his last concert in 1880. He received everywhere proofs of the fervent sympathy and affection of his own people. At his farewell concert in Bergen he was greeted with a very rain of flowers by the ladies, although the season was so far advanced that these were grown in their houses and not in their gardens.

In October, 1838, he left Norway for his third continental tour. He gave five concerts in Copenhagen, one of which was for the founding of a pension fund for the chorus of the Royal Opera. He was presented at court, and played for King Frederic, who gave him a gold snuff-box set with diamonds, saying, "As you have won the hearts of my people, it is fitting that I should present you the key to my kingdom." On the cover of the box was a picture in enamel of the fortress by which the harbor of Copenhagen is defended.

The following letter from Hans Christian Andersen will be of interest here: —

COPENHAGEN, *December 8, 1838.*

MY DEAR GOOD FRIEND, — At this moment you are in my birthplace! I must bid you welcome there, and once more chat with you. It is only some days since we first met, but there are natures that need no longer

time to become dear to each other, and ours, I think, are of them.

Thanks for the lyric strains of your violin, — if they could be rendered in words we should have a wonderful cycle of poems. Although you played to the world at large, and many felt deeply what a human heart spoke to them in melody, I was egotistic enough — or perhaps you will give my feeling a nobler name — to imagine and dream that it was singing for me alone ; that I alone heard you tell in fragments the story of your artist life through your tones ! Ah ! long before I heard you, I had felt an interest in your genial personality ; but now that we have met face to face, seen and understood each other, that sentiment has become friendship. I feel it will be a pleasure to know that you have won a soul ; therefore I tell you, and am not ashamed. Everyday people would not understand me, and they would smile at this epistle, but I do not write to them in this strain — only to the friend Ole Bull.

One of these days I shall call on your uncle to see the dear little Ole,<sup>1</sup> kiss him, and think of his father and mother. The poor *bonne*, so suddenly dropped down in this corner of Europe, must be lonely. I send your lovely wife a whole bouquet of compliments. She cannot have forgotten me altogether — because of my wretched French, if for no other reason. Yesterday I dined with Thorwaldsen. We spoke of you, and when I told him that I should write to you, he asked to be remembered. He had tried to find you at the Hotel

<sup>1</sup> The first baby, the darling child, whom Ole Bull mentioned in his letters before and after his birth, with the greatest tenderness.

d'Angleterre, but they told him incorrectly, it seems, that you had gone to Roskilde, and he did not succeed in seeing you.

What an agreeable surprise would a few lines be from you ! Ah, do let me know how your own bodily self is thriving. You were not well when we said good-by — write of yourself. But do so at once, while the feeling is warm ; later — well, I fear that if you do not, others will absorb your time, and that you will *not* write. Send at least a few words — and now, God bless you ! May you have all the success and happiness you deserve ! Your name has a pleasant sound in Europe, your heart is known to your friends. I have many greetings for you from the C.'s, where I make my home. The *spirituelle* daughters think a great deal of you ; they said they hardly knew you well enough to ask to be remembered, but why should I not tell you what must always be dear to you ? Much, much love to you. Farewell ! with fraternal heart. Yours, H. C. ANDERSEN.

By way of Odense, Flensburg, Schleswig, and Kiel, Ole Bull went to Hamburg, where he appeared three times ; then to Bremen, Brunswick, and Hanover. He also went to Cassel, having received an invitation from the prince and Spohr, who now received him in the most kindly manner, and seemed anxious by his cordiality to blot out all memory of their former meeting. The following letter will show their friendly relations at this time : —



CASSEL, *den 19<sup>ten</sup> Januar*, 1839.

WOHLGEBORENER, HOCHGEEHRTER HERR, — Gleich nach Empfang des Briefes von meinem Bruder habe ich Seine Hoheit den Prinz-Regent um das Theater für Ihr Concert gebeten und selbiges für den ersten freien Tag, nämlich nächsten Dienstag den 22<sup>sten</sup> bewilligt erhalten. Sollte dieser Brief Sie nun noch in Hannover antreffen, so werden Sie freilich zum Dienstag nicht hier seyn können; dann würde die Bewilligung aber auch für Freitag den 25<sup>sten</sup> oder Dienstag den 29<sup>sten</sup> übertragen werden können. Da Sie nun jedenfalls einen freien Tag und das Theater zu Ihrer Disposition finden werden, so lade ich Sie nochmals ein, uns mit Ihrer Hierherkunft zu erfreuen. Eine vorläufige Anzeige derselben in der hiesigen Zeitung werde ich sogleich veranstalten. Alle übrigen Veranstalten zum Concert lassen sich dann sehr bald besorgen. Da die Nachricht Ihrer Hierherkunft unter den Musikfreunden grossen Jubel erregen wird, so darf ich wohl hoffen, dass Sie auch mit dem pecuniären Erfolg des Concerts nicht unzufrieden sein werden. Mit vorzüglicher Hochachtung,

Ew. Wohlge., ergebenst,

LOUIS SPOHR.

Ole Bull gave two concerts to crowded houses in Cassel, and then went to Berlin. There were some difficulties in making terms for the theatre here, the king himself being proprietor and supreme manager. The musicians, moreover, were not favorable to Ole Bull, because of certain one-

sided reports of an intrigue against him in Stockholm, which he had wholly overcome, and which had resulted in making him more popular in Sweden than ever. Last of all came the attack of the critic Finck. When Ole Bull played in Berlin Herr Finck was ill, and unable to attend the concert. He sent and asked the artist to visit him. He went and played for him, and also explained his method, and the changes he had made in his bow. Shortly after he left Berlin the criticism appeared in the *Leipsic Musical Gazette*. Herr Finck said that the technique of the artist was indeed astonishing, and that he was not lacking in certain points in his execution, as some had said. He found his tone absolutely pure, and his staccato, pizzicato, etc., marvelous and incomparable, but claimed that his art, when before the public, was artifice, a kind of astounding legerdemain. His chief attack was directed against his compositions. It might well have been thought a criticism against Paganini revived, so similar was it to the charges made against that violinist.

Mendelssohn wrote to his sister Rebecca, from Berlin, February 15, 1844, as follows : —

The musical public here are just like Finck, editor of the old *Musical Gazette* ; they are capital at finding out the weak points of what is good, and discovering merit in mediocrity, which annoys me more than anything.

In spite of the animadversions of the critic, the public crowded the concerts of Ole Bull, whose only answer was through his violin. He traveled closely on the heels of the celebrated violinist, Lapinsky, the idol of the *Musical Gazette*. Whenever they met, Lapinsky was sorely defeated, and at last he determined to keep altogether out of Ole Bull's way. The latter next gave five concerts in Breslau, and sixteen in Vienna. His rendering of the clarionet adagio in Mozart's "Quartette in D flat, transcribed for Violin," was so much admired, that he was obliged to repeat it at all his concerts in Vienna.

Not a note of the score was changed, and the reverence for Mozart, revealed in his performance, made a very deep impression. It may be remarked here that those who have made the masterpieces of Mozart the study of a life-time, who have edited his works, and dwelt upon the perfection of their instrumentation, have also said that Ole Bull's rendering of these, especially of the adagios, showed a deeper, more appreciative understanding of them than had ever been attained before by any instrumentalist. Ole Bull used to say that Mozart was his religion. To him, there could be no more beautiful, no loftier expression of human thought and aspiration than he found in the works of that master. He felt



that no mortal could write Mozart's "Requiem" and live.

From Vienna Ole Bull went to Hungary, giving concerts in Pesth, Raab, and Presburg. He purchased a rare violin in Pesth labeled "Antonius Stradivarius Cremonesius faciebat, anno 1687." This instrument was unique, being the only one which the master had inlaid with ebony and ivory. It had been made to order for Philip the Sixth of Spain, and remained in the possession of the Kings of Spain until the reign of Charles the Fourth, when it was stolen by the French. Ole Bull bought it of Herr Rorats, an amateur, who had purchased it because of its beautiful appearance, its tone not recommending it. But in Ole Bull's hands its noble and pure tone was soon restored.

He returned again to Vienna, giving five concerts to full houses. A critic remarked that his "Norway's Mountains" and his playing of Mozart had conciliated his few obstinate opponents, and united all voices in his praise.

From Linz he went to Salzburg, the home of Mozart. He had the honor of proposing and giving the first concert for the Mozart fund, and the great satisfaction of having the wife of Mozart present at the performance.

Being engaged in Paris for January, 1839, for

concerts at the Grand Opéra, he hastened there via Munich, Baden-Baden, and Strasburg, giving concerts in these places.

He returned to Germany soon after, giving one concert in Carlsruhe and two in Stuttgart. The King of Wurtemberg gave him a ring set in brilliants. He also visited Cassel again, where two concerts were given with great success; also others in Augsburg, Bonn, Mannheim, Landau, Carlsruhe, and Heidelberg, after which he returned to Paris in the autumn of 1839.

A few extracts from letters to his wife, during this season of 1839, may be added here: —

PRESBURG, *April*, 17, 1839.

Instead of arriving at five o'clock we did not reach this place until eight; the driver got asleep on his seat and fell down under the carriage wheels; the horses ran against a post, breaking the carriage, and finally got away, giving us a good deal of trouble to catch them. The weather is fine, and I have taken fresh horses in order to reach Raab this evening. To-morrow morning I shall reach Pesth. . . . The surrounding country here is most beautiful and the journey very interesting, many of the old monuments being well preserved. . . .

PESTH, Sunday, *April* 21.

I arrived in Pesth yesterday evening: it seems that I was impatiently looked for. I waited a day and a half in Comorn for the steamer to Pesth, visiting the won-

derful fortifications there. . . . I wanted a distraction from my suffering. God knows how much I have suffered! I still hope and work, not for myself, for you, my family, my country, my Norway, of which I am proud. Why should I dwell upon my sad thoughts? You indeed have more than enough yourself. You share with me the memory of our little Ole<sup>1</sup> waiting for us on the other side. . . . You must come as soon as possible. . . . God have you in his keeping.

MUNICH, *October 19, 1839.*

A letter just received from my mother, announcing the death of our dear, good grandmother.<sup>2</sup> It occurred the same time that they received the tidings of our child's death. Mother tries to console me and sympathizes with you. . . .

MUNICH, *October 21, 1839.*

My concert was a great success; it seems that the enthusiasm never reached such a pitch before in Munich. At Carlsruhe I called upon Baron Moltke; he offered to contract with the manager of the theatre for me. In Stuttgart I saw Madame Merlin and the

<sup>1</sup> They had received the news of the child's death soon after their departure from Copenhagen.

<sup>2</sup> His love for his mother's mother was one of the strongest and tenderest of his heart-ties. He loved, respected, and admired her. She had from his earliest childhood sympathized with him. At her knee he learned the folk-songs and folk-lore of Norway. Her teachings influenced his thoughts and life, and to dream of her or his father gave him great happiness. Her dear face, he used to say, seemed to be near him when he played his "Mother's Prayer."



Prince of Montfort, and expect the answer of the intendant. . . .

November 4, 1839.

I have so much to tell you I don't know where to begin. Mozart's widow was invited to Munich by the king to hear the opera of "Don Giovanni" performed. She and her sister made me a visit, and she invited me to sit with her in her box, that we might hear the opera together. The director has been working against me, because I went the evening after my second concert to a festival given by the artists in honor of the celebrated Schwanthaler the sculptor, who now rivals Thorwaldsen, and played two pieces. Germany's most gifted artists gave me their loudest plaudits, but the director, having been recently decorated by the king, thought I ought to have limited my performance to his establishment. He visited Madame Mozart in her box, turning his back upon me the whole time. I afterwards told him my candid opinion of his behavior, and added that I would play no more in his theatre.

The artists and their wives made an entertainment for me later, and as they regretted they were not to hear me more, I played for them. I also played at the house of the celebrated painter Cornelius. The *literati* of Munich were present, and it was a great honor and delight to me to be able to hold the attention of these men ; but some of the aristocracy are not pleased with me, and think I have not bowed sufficiently low to the powers that be. Day after to-morrow I give my first concert in Augsburg, and hope to give a second one. I am very anxious about you. . . .

Having received word of the birth of a second son, he writes from Augsburg, November 16, 1839:—

My dear, think of my surprise and delight when I received the happy news! Let us praise God for his goodness to us, and let us hope that He will preserve our son to us! I write a large hand that your eyes may not be tried. I received a letter yesterday from Dr. Dufours, just before my concert, but was so moved that I could not write. I had to go out and walk, to catch my breath. Be careful, my dearest friend. You must not worry or be disturbed, for both your dear sakes. Dr. Dufours is a rare man, and I am proud to call him my friend. So much self-denial, frankness, and honesty, allied to such force of character and originality, are gifts seldom to be found united in one person. Tell him how grateful I am to him, and that I can hardly wait until my return to Paris to express my thanks.

I give one more concert here on Saturday, and then go to Stuttgart. . . .

STUTTGART, *November 18, 1839.*

Your last letter has given me the greatest joy, but I fear you are not prudent enough. . . . I arrived here last evening; concert next Tuesday. A warm invitation from Nuremberg and Frankfort. My route will be as follows: Nuremberg, Würzburg, Frankfort, Darmstadt, Mannheim, Heidelberg, Carlsruhe, Strasburg, and Paris. In Augsburg I received an invitation from the Queen Dowager of Bavaria to return to Munich. I played for her, and her manner at parting was most cor-

dial. She gave me a pin set with brilliants as a souvenir of the visit. . . .

FRANKFORT, *December 1, 1839.*

Now I am a moment alone ! . . . the whole day long one continuous reception of visitors ! I dined with an old friend from Paris, Hiller, the composer. . . .

*December 7, 1839.*

You will find many alterations in the finale of my Bravura Variations. I have still much to do as regards my compositions themselves, and my playing of them, before they are satisfactory to me. I find every day that there are improvements possible, and grave errors to be corrected, but I have a firm will, and am trying to do better and better. It is very fortunate that none of my compositions are published ; I shall take good care not to have this done for some time. . . . I bought a fine Nicolaus Amati in Nuremberg, very much like the one I left in London. . . . Its tone thrills me. Vuillaume will be astonished at its beauty. He must put it in order for me according to my own method. Should it compare favorably with my large Gaurnerius, it will be well worth the eighty louis d'or that I paid for it. This would be a high price for an Amati of ordinary size, but the large form increased its value.

MAYENCE, *December 13, 1839.*

I have so much to attend to that I have no time to eat or sleep except when in my traveling carriage, and you know that does not give real rest when over-fatigued from concerts. . . .

I must correspond with the directors of the theatres ;



must obtain information regarding the people with whom I am to deal ; I must make my appointments for concerts and rehearsals, have my music copied, correct the scores, compose, play, and travel nights. I am always cheated, and in everlasting trouble. I reproach myself when everything does not turn out for the best, and am consumed with grief. I really believe I should succumb to all these demands and fatigues if it were not for my drinking cold water and bathing in it every morning and evening.

The detailed account that has been given of the years 1836-1839, may afford the reader an insight into the life of the artist, his struggles, his labors, his inspiration, and his reward. Many, indeed most, of the seriously disheartening experiences which Ole Bull suffered, were the results of his lack of early training. No inexperienced woman could be more fearful of asking or accepting securities for business obligations lest it should be considered a lack of confidence on his part. He made no attempt to order his business in detail, but left to others what he could have readily mastered, always waiting for results to justify the enterprise ; and this dependence was an unfortunate habit for a generous, sensitive, trustful man. It made him too unjustly suspicious after painful experiences. He was apt, when he found himself unfairly treated,

to break off a business relation, without regard to the consequences, and thus often exposed himself to much annoyance and trouble.

His anger had no taint of narrow vindictiveness or revenge, but often served to free him from the toils of others. Then they might find him on the vantage ground of work or influence, to which his ready resources had led him, and where they could not follow him. He was not suspicious by nature, and lent too ready an ear to the suggestions or pretensions of others; his sympathetic nature and his needs making him an easy victim for designing persons, and giving rise to his chief troubles. Curiously enough, those who had grossly betrayed his confidence often found that they could not do without the charm of his presence after once having known it, however they might disregard his interests and happiness; and they knew that he could not but be generous to a vanquished foe. He used to say, "I will not, because one man has failed me, expect the like of another, until it comes." His trust in the good impulses of human nature never failed him long. Leaving home at the age of seventeen, wholly untrained in practical affairs, he worked out many a problem of life, as of art, at the hardest — through bitter experience in poverty and tears; but the ideals and aspirations of his youth were those of his age.

On his return to Paris, in the winter of 1839, his engagement at the Grand Opéra was broken up, through an intrigue of Schlesinger, the publisher of *La Revue Musicale*, and he gave a few concerts at the Théâtre de la Renaissance. In the spring of 1840 he went to London, taking Mr. Morandi, a harpist, as his secretary; but finding him unreliable in some respects, he determined to break loose from the connection at the risk of losing twelve hundred francs, which he had already advanced to Morandi. The latter, knowing that he could hold him on his contract, acted accordingly. •

One day when Ole Bull was playing with Franz Liszt, in the latter's room, the manager of the hotel was announced, who told Ole Bull that a policeman was outside with a warrant obtained by Morandi, and that the latter himself was standing at the corner of the street to watch the arrest. The artist spent a pleasant afternoon and evening with Liszt, and returned quietly to his own hotel at midnight, the officer and Morandi having meanwhile become tired of watching for him. The following day he went to his ambassador, Count Bjornstjerna, and Morandi's lawyer was sent for, who demanded sixty pounds, for breach of contract. Ole Bull was indignant, and refused to pay a penny; but what was to be done? It



was two o'clock. At three he was to play at St. James for the queen, and at the corner of the street two policemen were waiting with the warrant for his arrest, if the claim of the lawyer should not be conceded. A cab was summoned, and one of Count Bjornstjerna's footmen, wrapped in Ole Bull's cloak, entered the vehicle and moved rapidly off, followed by the policemen; while five minutes later, the artist himself was driven quietly to the palace, in the count's carriage. In the evening the matter was compromised, Ole Bull paying twenty pounds, in addition to the twelve hundred francs already advanced.

In a letter to his wife, dated in London, May 15, 1840, he writes of Liszt as follows:—

I have not spoken to you of Franz Liszt, with whom I have formed the warmest friendship in a very short time. We have played together and are mutually inspired with admiration and sympathy for each other. You will make his acquaintance. . . .

Ole Bull used to tell an amusing incident concerning Liszt and himself. They had played a good deal together, often giving concerts without the aid of a manager. On one occasion when a manager had been employed, and many distinguished artists appeared, Ole Bull had been advertised with special prominence as the "emi-

ment" violinist, but did not know of this. On going to his friend's somewhat late to supper, Liszt remarked, in a cutting tone, "Ah, our *eminent* friend has arrived!" Ole Bull saw that the feeling of the company was not cordial, and that Liszt had only been the spokesman of their discontent. At last he arose and said: "I do not understand the drift of your conversation, but can readily see that my presence is not agreeable. I am pained in proportion as I have entertained the warmest admiration and friendship for you, Monsieur Liszt;" and he courteously took his leave. As he was walking rapidly away he heard his name shouted two or three times on the street, and, turning, saw Liszt running after him, hatless, and waving his napkin as he shouted, "My good friend, there must be some mistake. I beg you to come back, and let us discover who has played us this trick." He then explained the cause of their irritation, and Ole Bull, in his turn, made it clear that he was not responsible for the offense. Cordiality was at once restored, and Liszt was the life of the evening. At its close he insisted that the company should breakfast with him the next morning. The invitation was accepted, and, after the breakfast and many pleasant topics had been discussed, Liszt suddenly turned to the manager, who was pres-

ent, and said: "We have decided to have a trial. I am to be judge, and you shall be permitted to answer, if you can, the charges brought against you as to that announcement of yesterday." After an examination and cross-examination, in which the man denied all responsibility in the matter, the judge pronounced sentence solemnly: "Ole Bull, I charge you to take this man, and hold him at arm's length out of the window" — they were in the third story — "until he do confess." So said, so done; and, dangling over the street, the man did confess a plot to breed jealousy and ill-will, in order to break up a combination of two names which, as already stated, had sometimes made the services of an *impressario* unnecessary. The torment of the culprit was heightened by an occasional query on the part of Ole Bull if he was not soon to be relieved, as his arms were too tired to hold out much longer; but Liszt kept the poor wretch hanging there until the last moment, when he released him only on the promise that he would never offend again.

During this season, Liszt and Ole Bull played the Beethoven "Kreutzer Sonata," at one of the Philharmonic Concerts. There was a great diversity of opinion among the critics as to the performance. The Philharmonic Society themselves gave expression to their judgment by the



presentation of a piece of silver plate to the violinist.

The following note from Liszt is a pleasant reminder of the engagements of that time : —

MON CHER OLE, — Arrivé hier à 3 heures ; concert à 8 heures et demi. Leurs altesses le grand Duc de Bade et le prince de S. l'ont honoré de leur présence. Du reste assemblée très-choisie, aristocratique — mais non pas très-nombreuse.

Benazet pourtant m'a assuré qu'il y avait là toute la bonne compagnie de Baden.

D'après cette épreuve, et quelques conversations, je crois pouvoir dire que vous ferez surement un ou deux bons concerts ici, et je vous engage beaucoup à ne pas rester d'avantage dans les environs sans vous faire entendre ici.

Mardi prochain je donnerai mon 2<sup>me</sup> concert. Mercredi je partirai pour Mayence où mon concert est annoncé pour le lendemain, et vendredi je compte être à Ems.

Ce que vous auriez donc, à ce qu'il me semble, de meilleur à faire, ce serait de venir ici lundi ou mardi, de jouer votre concert dans la semaine (peut-être jeudi ou samedi) ; et ensuite de repartir pour Ems, où je vous annoncerai de mon mieux.

À revoir donc, probablement bientôt, mon cher prodigieux artiste ; gardez-moi votre bonne amitié et comptez bien sur toute la mienne.

Tout à vous d'admiration et de sympathie,

F. LISZT.

Soyez assez bon pour faire mes plus affectueux compliments à M. Heinefetter et priez-le de ne pas annoncer mon concert pour lundi ainsi que nous en étions convenus. Lors de mon passage à Mannheim (mercredi soir) j'aurai soin de l'informer du jour que nous puissions choisir. Si par le plus grand des hazards on pouvait m'annoncer un concert mercredi, je crois que je pourrai être à temps à Mannheim — mais il vaut mieux, je crois, ne pas forcer ainsi la chose. En tout cas n'oubliez pas de prévenir Heinefetter que lundi il me sera impossible de tenir ma promesse.

Ole Bull now went over to Brussels, where he had a warm friend in Monsieur Fétis; thence to Antwerp, the Rhine towns, and Heidelberg, joining company with Liszt. He then returned to Paris, but was soon called to Berlin, where he had been specially invited to participate in the festivities of the coronation of King William (the present Emperor of Germany). He gave six concerts to the royal family and their visitors. In Leipsic he also gave six concerts, where the musical society, "Der Tunnel," presented him with a silver vase, surmounted by a figure of Apollo with the lyre.

It was in Leipsic that the Cellini Gaspar da Salo violin came to him. Mendelssohn and Liszt were dining with Ole Bull, when a servant placed by his master's plate an envelope bearing a great

seal. "Open your letter, Ole Bull! it may be important," said Liszt. It was from the son of Rhaczek, the owner of the violin, and imparted the news of his father's death, adding that a clause of his will directed that the instrument should be offered to Ole Bull. Delighted, he told the news to his friends, who, when they learned the value set upon the violin, advised him to be cautious as to its purchase. "If it is really worth the price you mean to pay for it," said Mendelssohn, "we must dedicate it together by playing the 'Kreutzer.'" When it came, and had been put in order, Mendelssohn's suggestion was carried out. He and Ole Bull played Beethoven's "Sonata," which was the first work performed on that wonderful instrument. The following description of the violin, by Mrs. Childs, is entirely faithful and correct:—

The violin, now in possession of Ole Bull, was made to the order of Cardinal Aldobrandini, one of a noble family at Rome memorable for their patronage of the fine arts. He gave for it 3,000 Neapolitan ducats, and presented it to the treasury of Innsprück, where it became a celebrated curiosity, under the name of "The Treasury-Chamber Violin." When that city was taken by the French, in 1809, it was carried to Vienna, and sold to Rhaczek, a wealthy Bohemian, whose splendid collection of rare and ancient stringed instruments had



attracted universal attention in the musical world. The gem of his museum was the violin manufactured by Da Salo, and sculptured by Cellini. He was offered immense sums for it by English, Russian, and Polish noblemen, but to all such offers he answered, "Not for the price of half Vienna."

A few years ago Ole Bull gave some fifteen concerts in Vienna, with the brilliant success which usually attends him. The Bohemian, who went with the crowd to hear him, was an enthusiastic admirer of his genius, and soon became personally acquainted with him. Until then he had considered himself the most learned man in Europe in the history of violins, the peculiar merits of all the most approved manufacturers, and the best methods of repairing deficiencies, or improving the tones. But with Ole Bull, love of the violin had been an absorbing passion from his earliest childhood. He never saw one of a novel shape, or heard one with a new tone, without studying into the causes of the tone, and the effects produced by the shape. Through every nook and corner of Italy he sought for new varieties of his favorite instrument, as eagerly as an Oriental merchant seeks for rare pearls. He had tried all manner of experiments; he knew at sight the tuneful qualities of every species of wood, and precisely how the slightest angle or curve in the fashion of an instrument would affect the sound. He imparted to the Bohemian amateur much information that was new and valuable; and this sympathy of tastes and pursuits produced a warm friendship between them. Of course, Ole looked with a longing eye on the oldest and best of his violins;

but the musical antiquarian loved it like an only child. He could not bring himself to sell it at that time, but he promised that, if he ever did part with it, the minstrel of Norway should have the preference over every other man in the world. He died two years afterward, and a letter from his son informed Ole Bull that his dying father remembered the promise he had given. He purchased it forthwith, and it was sent to him at Leipsic.

On the head of this curious violin is carved and colored an angel's face, surrounded by flowing curls of hair. Behind this figure, leaning against the shoulders, is a very beautiful little mermaid, the human form of which terminates in scales of green and gold. The neck of the instrument is ornamented with arabesques in blue, red, and gold. Below the bridge is a mermaid in bronze. Thorwaldsen took great delight in examining these figures, and bestowed enthusiastic praise on the gracefulness of the design, and the excellence of the workmanship. Ole Bull was born in February, and, by an odd coincidence, the bridge of his darling violin is delicately carved with two intertwining fishes, like the zodiacal sign of February. Two little Tritons, cut in ivory, are in one corner of the bow. Altogether, it is a very original and singularly beautiful instrument. It has the rich look of the Middle Ages, and would have been a right royal gift for some princely troubadour. . . . The wood is extremely soft, and very thick. The upper covering is of an exceedingly rare species of Swiss pine, celebrated in the manufacture of violins. It grows on the Italian side of the Alps ; for sunshine

and song seem inseparably connected, and the balmy atmosphere which makes Italy so rich in music, and imparts to her language such liquid melody, seems breathed into her trees. Those acquainted with music are well aware that the value of an instrument is prodigiously increased by the age of the wood, and that the purity of its tone depends very much on the skillfulness of the hand which has played upon it.

As the best and brightest human soul can never free itself entirely from the influence of base and vulgar associations in youth, so a violin never quite recovers from the effect of discordant vibrations. So perceptible is this to a delicate ear, that when Ole Bull first performed in Philadelphia, he at once perceived that the double bass-viol in the orchestra was a very old instrument, and had been well played on. Some time after, the horse and rider that represented General Putnam's leap down the precipice, plunged into the orchestra of the theatre and crushed the old bass-viol. As soon as Ole Bull became aware of the accident he hastened to buy the fragments. The wood of his violin was so old, and so thoroughly vibrated, that he had never been able to obtain a sounding-post adapted to it.

This post is an extremely small piece of wood in the interior of the instrument, but the inharmonious vibration between the old and the new disturbed his sensitive ear, until he was enabled to remedy the slight defect by a fragment of the double-bass.

One of the most curious facts in connection with this memorable violin is, that it was probably never played upon by any other hand than Ole Bull's, though it is



three hundred years old. It had always been preserved as a curiosity, and when it came into his possession it had no bar inside, nor any indication that such a necessary appendage had ever been put into it. The inward spiritual carving has been entirely done by this "Amphion of the North," as he is styled by Andersen, the celebrated Danish novelist. The interior is completely covered with indentations in ovals and circles produced by the vibration of his magic tones. Doubtless the angels could sing from them fragmentary melodies of the universe; but to us they reveal no more than wave-marks on the shores of the ever-rolling sea.

Some of the concerts on the Rhine had not been well announced and prepared, and the artist found himself just too early or late for royal visitors; but the feeling of disappointment expressed in his letters was only transient. In Dresden his wife and child joined him. He gave two concerts there, and then went to Prague.

February 9, 1841, he writes from that city:—

My time has been taken up by illness, parties, rehearsals, concerts; I have already played seven times in public here, five times on my own account, and twice for others. I play to-day and then rest until Sunday, when I play my new "Concerto in E minor" for the first time. It is not yet finished, but I have time enough. I have met with such enthusiasm here as I do not remember to have witnessed in any other country.

Again, on February 17, 1841, he writes:—

I seem to belong to the world here rather than myself. I am invited every day to dinners, suppers, balls, soirées, matinées, and the Lord knows what. If I decline, they come again, until I yield, and if I accept once I cannot refuse again without a plausible excuse. . . . My concerts are crowded and my own opinion (also expressed by others) is that I have played pretty well in Prague, especially at my concert last Sunday forenoon for the benefit of the widows of poor musicians. I played my new composition, the most difficult of all my pieces. It was finished Saturday morning at half-past eleven o'clock, the rehearsal took place at half-past three, and the next day at noon I played it in public. I shall play it again to-morrow, making some alterations. . . . I have had flowers, wreaths, and poems thrown me; one in German, as you can now read it, I send you. Some written in Bohemian and translated for me are very beautiful.

The following bears date, March 1, 1841:—

I have just given my eleventh and last concert here, and although nobody remembers so successful a concert in Prague, and all ask me to give one more, as many persons could not obtain seats for this, I am compelled to leave in order to reach Russia in due time. I played a new composition, "Grüss aus des Ferne." It was finished only at half-past seven on the morning of the concert. It was a success. . . . My warmest greetings to Prof. Dahl.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An eminent Norwegian painter, who was professor at the Royal Academy in Dresden. He was a warm personal friend of Ole Bull.

From Prague Ole Bull went via Breslau to Warsaw, where he played the "Polacca Guerriera." The youth of the city requested its repetition, but many told him that it only revived in the Poles the memory of their lost liberty, and he did not play it again.

From Wilna he went to St. Petersburg, where a serious illness prostrated him. He writes from there May 4, 1841: —

You ask me to give you a detailed account of what you call my triumphs. On the road from Wilna to St. Petersburg my carriage broke down three times; the mud went over the wheels, and eight horses had the greatest difficulty in drawing it out and onward. There was no end of trouble at each station to get horses, although I had a *podoroshna*, or authorization from the government. . . . Thursday evening I played at the residence of the Countess Rossi (the celebrated Sonntag), and you will like to know that I played well. I leave at once for Moscow. . . .

Again, May 22d, he writes: —

I had some sea-captains from Bergen to dine and celebrate with me the 17th of May, at my hotel. They said we were expected in Bergen. . . . When it was known that I intended to leave the city without giving a concert, a deputation came from the orchestra, urging me to play. . . . I accepted on condition that they should arrange everything for me, that I need not be obliged to leave my room. This will detain me here



longer than I had anticipated. . . . I have to build castles in the air to try and forget that I am a prisoner, but I have often been thankful that you were not here to share the hardships of this journey with me. . . .

As soon as he was able he joined his wife in Dresden, and they went via Hamburg to Norway, to his mother's house, at Valestrand, near Bergen. This was the summer home of his childhood. For generations it had been in the possession of his father's family, and he afterwards purchased it, built a house, and lived there some ten or twelve years.

Ole Bull spent the summer of 1841 at Valestrand very quietly. In December he went to Christiania, whence he writes: —

For my encore last evening I gave them an improvisation on the National Hymn. I may decide to give a good number of concerts, as they are fighting like wolves for seats. The king is to come soon, and I should like to remain a little longer to see the good old man. Countess Wedel has invited me to spend Christmas week at Jarlsberg, and I am sorry that I cannot. Löwenskjöld is extremely attentive to me. . . . The Egebergs are as affectionate and true friends as ever; glad when I come, and never complaining when I do not, which makes them still dearer to me, if possible. This family have ever had a great influence on my life; they helped me when I was in sore need, and gave me good advice; they encouraged and assisted me in every

way in their power, and always without permitting my gratitude to become a burden.

January 11, 1842, he writes : —

It was three o'clock this morning before I got to bed, as the actors at the theatre and about a hundred of my friends had arranged a company for me, which really was delightful. . . . When I entered the hall a chorus sang a poem written by A. Munch, to a melody from the "Polacca." . . . At supper your health and the children's was proposed and drank, and I responded with my violin. . . . When am I to be permitted to lead a peaceful domestic life with you and our little ones?

His first concert in Christiania was given for the benefit of the theatre. The banquet which he mentioned took place just before his departure. The following is a quotation from one of the local papers : —

Many songs and poems were written in his honor, and the warmth and pathos of the melodies he played so thrilled all present that they believed they had never heard him play so well. The guests accompanied him *en masse* to his hotel, and cheered again and again.

The next incident of interest was his concert at Lund, where he went via Frederikshald and Gottenburg. The price of the tickets was very moderate, — one dollar, — but many were sold for ten. The people received him most cordially, and an address of welcome was made by the

chancellor of the University, to which the artist replied with his violin. On his departure the students accompanied him in procession, and bade him farewell with songs and cheers. On the 19th of February he went to Copenhagen and Hamburg, where he gave six concerts to crowded houses; then to Amsterdam, where he gave six more concerts, and quite electrified the phlegmatic Dutch. His concerts were an artistic, and at last a financial, success, but it was a success which he conquered.

He writes May 2, 1842, from Amsterdam: —

What shall I say to you of my troubles and vexations! As I could confide them to no one, they have dwelt in my heart. Art is ever dearly bought, and the true artist easily deceived, for it is only by renouncing the material good that he may obtain the divine happiness of following the guidance of his imagination and creative power. To understand himself rightly, he must renounce all else, give himself wholly to his art, and fight ignorance and stupidity. I am not the man to give up the battle, but how many wounds and blows before one reaches the goal! The recompense art gives is a success even in failure. Last year Rubini and Madame Persiani at the same prices — it really seems impossible — gave concerts here to empty benches.

In June he returned to Bergen, via Hamburg. In September he went to Christiania to assist a Swedish artist, and in December gave his own



concerts. In January, 1843, he visited Sweden, and Wergeland says:—

After giving concerts at Carlstad and Orebro, he arrived one night, at one o'clock, at Upsala, dragged in a huge old coach by six horses through the snow. Upsala, cosily nestled among forest-clad hills, is one of the oldest and most remarkable cities of Sweden. One thousand years ago it was the principal centre of heathen worship. In the low temple, on the rude altar, the Vikings came to offer up to Odin and Thor the customary Yule sacrifice. All the great movements in the Swedish history of those early days were inaugurated in this temple, and dim memories thickly shroud the place. Four hundred years ago the first Swedish university was founded. All the science, art, literature, and poetry the Swedish people have produced originated there; and many illustrious names, such as Linnæus and Berzelius, shed their radiant halo far beyond the boundaries of the country. Upsala now is only a student's camp. Libraries, lecture halls, laboratories, museums, and dormitories cluster around the cathedral, and all the life of the place has been absorbed by the one institution—the University. Ole Bull came to Upsala not to give a concert, but to play for the students. It is true, as Jules Janin said of him, his violin is his love, his art his life. To express himself in tones and be understood is his one great joy, and he went to Upsala because the students have, and always have had, a great reputation for musical sensibility and musical education. But his entry was not very

propitious. The night was dark, no inn was to be discovered, and the cold was biting. Suddenly a swarm of young students returning from a Christmas masquerade singing, dancing, and making merry, came along, and, of course, the large old coach and six became the butt of their frolic. It ended in Ole Bull's ordering the coach to turn about and drive back to Stockholm.

This occurrence led to some misrepresentations and ill-natured comments in the local journals, to which Ole Bull replied in a letter published in the *Aftenbladet*, January 22, 1843. After explaining the circumstances, and reminding those who had accused him of failing to keep an engagement that no concert had been announced, and that he was therefore free to act as he thought best, he concludes thus: —

Although I do not recognize the right of any man to call me to account for my conduct when I have wronged nobody, although I believe I ought not to be excluded from the universal right of a man to determine his own actions, still, I am willing to state briefly my motives for leaving Upsala without playing, cherishing the hope that a cultured and impartial public will feel and agree with me that it was something quite other than a freakish temperament which led me to take that step.

I had laid my route by way of Upsala with the intention of inviting, as I had done in Lund, the students of the University to attend my concert, cherishing the fond hope that the cultivated young men at Sweden's first

University would kindly receive, through me, a musical greeting from the brother-land, and give me their approbation. Although the insignificant affair which took place on my arrival in Upsala of itself neither could so offend me that it should lead me to leave the town in "angry mood," nor seduce me to such an act of injustice as to lay the fault of a few thoughtless young men at the door of a numerous and honorable corporation, still, every one who intelligently and impartially examines the matter will see that it brought me into a frame of mind not at all in harmony with the problem I was about to solve. Consequently, it was not anger on account of the wrong I had suffered, or ill-will toward Upsala town and the students, but despondency and dejected spirits which led me so quietly to leave a town which I both desire and expect to see again under more favorable circumstances, for no one recognizes more fully than I that it is the aim and object of art to unite, not to disunite.

OLE BULL.

The renowned historian, Professor Gustaf Geijer, now wrote to Ole Bull, urging him to come to Upsala. He cordially consented, and to his first concert he invited the whole body of students. Each selection played by the violinist was warmly applauded, and the excitement culminated in the wildest enthusiasm, when, at the request of Professor Geijer, he improvised variations on the popular Swedish melody, "Lille Karen." At the close of the concert he was met in the ves-



tibule by the students, who escorted him with songs and cheers to his hotel, where they finally dispersed after giving a hearty cheer in response to his few words of thanks. At six o'clock a "Sexa" was given in the large University Hall. A letter published at this time, said: —

The artist, whose frank, attractive manner won him all hearts, in responding to the toast proposed in his honor, dwelt especially on the good-will which in his person had been shown the brother kingdom and Norse people, and when lifted on the "golden chair,"<sup>1</sup> proposed from his elevated seat the toast, "Sweden for ever!" while from the same height Professor Geijer emptied his glass to "his boys."

Sentiment after sentiment was given, and the guest of the evening at last expressed his happiness at the misadventure of his first visit, which had caused him to know better possibly than he would otherwise have done, the students of Upsala. After midnight the company followed him to his door, and he promised another concert in the University Hall, where he said he had received the greatest honor of his life. No other artist has been the recipient of such homage.

His second concert was, if possible, a greater success than the first, and both Bishop Faxe and

<sup>1</sup> The recipient of this honor is lifted on the shoulders of two men, two more supporting the legs in front, and two the arms behind, and he is carried in triumphal procession, the flaming punch bowl held aloft, while the students, each with a glass in one hand and a lighted taper in the other, follow in order.

Professor Geijer thanked him in behalf of the Upsala people.

From Upsala Ole Bull returned to Stockholm. There he had very serious trouble, to which he refers in a letter to his wife, January 26, 1843, as follows:—

Pratté wrote his dear friend Mr. R., who five years since published that pamphlet against me in Copenhagen, and told him that I had spoken ill of the king and royal family, of the royal orchestra and its leader, of the Swedes in general, and of Stockholm in particular. He also sent a criticism to be published in the papers. Mr. R. circulated these rumors, and succeeded in making many enemies for me everywhere; but the affair in Upsala, where I showed much moderation, has already disarmed many people, and the public begin to know how matters stand. To R.'s published attacks I have made no reply. *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*—and he is getting to be too well known to lead people astray longer. Pratté wrote to R. that Henrik Wergeland was the author of the critique. It is simply absurd to impute to him such meanness. We must hope that all will turn out for the best.

February 6, 1843, he writes:—

Intrigue against me has exhausted itself; but he who endures slavery deserves to live a slave. I have thus far been able to turn circumstances that seemed against me to my advantage.

Ole Bull was deeply hurt and put to great in-

convenience by the ill-will of the musicians of Stockholm, and had been obliged to call in an orchestra from a neighboring town; but in the end his vindication was complete, and the weapons of his assailants recoiled upon themselves. He gave a concert at the palace, arranged by the queen in honor of the king's birthday, and was received more warmly than ever. His detractors had only helped to establish him more firmly in the esteem of the people of the Swedish capital.

The twenty-fifth anniversary of Karl Johan's accession to the throne was also Ole Bull's birthday, and he invited the Norwegians in Stockholm to celebrate the royal festivities, and played the national melodies.

He soon received letters from Henrik Wergeland, in whose house Pratté lived, and who was indignant to find that his name should have been used against his friend. It was to destroy this vexatious fabrication that he determined to write the sketch of Ole Bull's life which is quoted so often in the present memoir.

On his way from Upsala to Stockholm, Ole Bull met at Jönköping his old teacher Lundholm, who, it will be remembered, had prophesied that his pupil would in time become as good a fiddler as himself. It was at the close of a snowy day, and the northern lights were shooting up the sky.



Lundholm, muffled in a bear skin, came along in a sleigh, and unwrapping his face called out to Ole Bull's driver to stop. Then he shouted to the artist: "Now that you are a celebrated violinist remember that, when I heard you play Paganini, I predicted your career would be a remarkable one." "You were mistaken," cried Ole Bull, jumping up; "I did not read Paganini at sight; I had played it before." "It makes no difference — good-by," and Lundholm urged on his horse and in a moment was out of sight.

We must pass by pleasant incidents at various cities and hurry on to Copenhagen, where he gave three concerts to audiences numbering several thousands. At the last concert he played his new composition, "*Siciliano e Tarantella*," which he was obliged to repeat, and then to acknowledge the ringing plaudits by playing a Norse and Danish national song. He was so happy in uniting these melodies, that the audience, when he had finished, rose to their feet with cries of "*Viva Ole Bull!*" While in Copenhagen he visited the Students' Union, and on his entrance was greeted by a song set to one of his own melodies: —

"Thanks for thy giving  
Our spirits their freedom;  
Thanks for thy greeting  
From Sigtuna town.

Bend but thy bow and  
Send forth thy arrows,  
Bleeds not the bosom  
With lovelier wound."

Here too the students escorted him to his hotel; and the king gave him a handsome ring in brilliants.

The celebrated violinist Ernst and the pianist Döhler were in Copenhagen at this time, and all three artists were living at the same hotel. They were old friends and heartily enjoyed the reunion. Ole Bull used to relate an amusing story of his early acquaintance with Ernst in Paris in 1836. He had been engaged by the Princess Damerond to arrange and take part in some quartette music at one of her soirées, and had secured the aid of Ernst and the brothers Boucher. As the musicians descended the stairs some white Polish dogs followed them, snarling and barking, to the salon. Ernst, who had on silk stockings and low shoes, began to retreat, thus encouraging one of the little brutes to bite him. The cur then rushed at Ole Bull, who deliberately lifted it on his toe and sent it up among the lights of the great chandelier. The attendant found on picking it up that the fall had killed it. The princess, raised on a sort of dais at the end of the apartment, had seen her pet's mishap, and in her

agitation sent a messenger to request the musicians to leave immediately. Ole Bull expressed his willingness to comply with the gracious request, so soon as the compensation of the artists he had engaged should be handed him. Her feelings were somewhat mollified at this suggestion, but as three of the quartette had already left, there was no other course but to pay him the twenty-five louis d'or, which the four friends spent in a supper at the Palais-Royal.

In April Ole Bull left Copenhagen, and gave concerts in Kiel, Hamburg, Bremen, and Oldenburg, returning to Hamburg. He there met Fanny Elssler, who had just returned from the United States. She urged him to try a season in that country, and he decided to make the trip at the earliest moment possible. Just at this time, he saw a malicious attack upon himself written by the secretary of Ernst and Döhler, but, as he discovered, without their knowledge. To meet this attack, so far as it denounced his compositions, he gave Schubert three of his pieces for publication — the first and last he ever published. These were, "*Variazioni di Bravoura*," "*La Preghiera d'una Madre*" (*Adagio Religioso*), and "*Il Notturmo*." They were all received with great favor by the critics at the time.

On the 19th of May, he wrote his wife from



Hamburg of his happiness that a daughter had been born to them. He also referred to the attack made upon him by Ernst's secretary. "If artists will make light of and ignore calumny and censure," he said, "they are sure to repent it in the end. They may keep their nobility of soul, but they will lose the respect of the public, and confidence in their own merits will be weakened. As I am about to go abroad I desire to leave behind some remembrance of myself, and have given Schubert certain pieces to publish."

In June he returned again to Copenhagen, and the enthusiasm then was, if possible, greater than ever. Ole Bull and his compositions became the universal topic of the newspaper paragraphers and of the people. Before the end of the month he went again to Christiania, and the illustrious Danish poet, Adam Öhlenschläger, happened to be a fellow-passenger on the steamer. In his "Reminiscences" the latter says:—

In 1843 I went with my youngest son, William, to Norway. One of our fellow-travelers was the violinist, Ole Bull, who, because of his own talent, has acquired not only a European but a world-wide celebrity. He had often awakened my admiration as well as my astonishment. His life is remarkable. He came as a poor unknown musician to Paris, and had suffered the most extreme want, when he was recognized, heard, appreciated,







loved, married, and soon acquired by his concerts a considerable fortune. His musical performances were an expression of his own character, a peculiar combination of a charming, childlike good-nature and tenderness, often interrupted by a restless excitement. Thus the most beautiful, ravishing tones and most genial fancies alternated with sudden piercing shrieks. It seemed as if Ole Bull with capricious fickleness delighted in destroying the tenderest and loftiest sentiment which he had evoked, and in offending those whom he had charmed, with oddities which did not control himself, but which he in a proud mood called forth whenever he pleased. He frequently appeared to me like a painter, who shows us a beautiful picture which he has just finished, and just as we are about to examine it more closely he draws his brush over it and blots it all out again. Still, justice must be done him. We heard many a charming piece that was not thus interrupted, and it is quite probable that this manner of his has been entirely abandoned in his riper years. No one ever played so charmingly as he an adagio of Mozart. In it he was able to subdue completely those grating features of a too violent individuality. I say he was precisely thus in his life. He sometimes spoiled the good he had done, but, with a childlike nature that was most becoming to the strong, fair young Norseman, it cost him no effort, on the other hand, to make amends for the harm he had done.

When he at one time, on board the steamer, had caused my displeasure by a too severe criticism of the Swedes and I had taken my seat on a bench, he came

leaping toward me on his hands and feet and barked at me like a dog. This was a no less original than amiable manner of bringing about a reconciliation. He often visited me in Copenhagen. In Christiania, where his young and beautiful wife resided, who as a Parisian did not find life in the North very agreeable, we dined with him, and on leaving he was kind enough to offer us one of his carriages for the journey to Bergen, his native town, whither he also soon was going. He was very strong, his arms were like steel, and it is very possible that it was his excessive physical strength which occasionally interrupted the tender tones, while he shook his head so that his hair fell down into his beautiful brown eyes. . . . When he played for the king in Copenhagen, and Frederick VI. asked him who had taught him to play, he answered "The Mountains of Norway, your majesty."

From Christiania Ole Bull went to Trondhjem, and at his concerts there, and in all the Norse towns the enthusiasm was unbounded. On the 12th of July, 1843, he writes:—

I have been on the Dovrefjeld since yesterday evening. It commands a splendid view, being the highest mountain in Norway, eight thousand feet above the level of the sea. As we ascended it began to rain, then to snow and hail very hard. The thunder and lightning had a weird effect. I was from the noon of one day until four the next morning ascending and descending the mountain from Jerkind. G., who was unused to mountain climbing, failed to reach the summit; he was

almost buried in the snow. Some Englishmen were of the party. I outwalked the guide, and reached the top before the others. A passing traveler does me the kindness to forward this to you.

From Trondhjem he writes:—

Gertner will remain here to paint the cathedral, which is a splendid structure and eight hundred years old. I gave a concert without any assistance, playing nearly two hours without cessation. It was very fatiguing, but, at least, nothing was ruined by a bad accompaniment, and the audience was pleased.

On the way from Bergen to Christiania, he stopped at several points to play for the peasants. Especially memorable to him was the scene in Sogn. He found many of the people in their Sunday dress, assembled in the quaint Borgund church, which has stood there some eight hundred years; and, with a driving storm outside, he played for them the folk-songs, as old, probably, as the edifice which sheltered them. Ole Bull visited this church again in 1879. On this, his last trip over the mountains, knots of workmen had assembled to greet him. Every hat was lifted and hearty cheers were given as the carriage rolled past. Wergeland says:—

Ole Bull's power, exercised through his violin over an audience, was truly wonderful. Once, on a journey in Norway, he played for a number of peasants whom he



incidentally found gathered in an inn. When he finished playing the deepest silence prevailed. Only the ticking of the big watches in their pockets was heard, when suddenly one of the men struck out his hand, and with great emphasis cried aloud, "This is a lie." If true mental power consists in lifting the unconscious forces of life into the light of the conscious, giving them form and shape, converting them into thought and will, Ole Bull's playing was not a lie. His tones fell on his hearers, like the first warm rain of spring, with a blessing.

His last months in Norway were spent in making preparations for the great journey to America. August found him again in Christiania. On the 11th of September he gave his farewell concert, and left with his wife and three children on the 16th, for Copenhagen. Wergeland, writing of his departure, says: "He left for America, preceded by his fame, and followed by thousands and thousands of grateful farewells from his countrymen."

On the 3d of October he gave a concert in Luneburg, which was attended by the King of Hanover and other royal personages; and, sending his family to Paris, he went himself, by way of Amsterdam and London, to Liverpool, where he took passage. He wrote his wife from Liverpool, November 4, 1843:—

Schubert has published the "Adagio Religioso,"

which will be sent you at Paris. You will find *your* name on the title-page. The "Bravura Variations" are dedicated to King Karl Johan (Bernadotte) as follows: "Variazioni di Bravoura, Fantasy on a theme of Bellini, dedicated to Karl Johan, King and Benefactor of my native land, Norway." It will be sent you, too. . . .

I am well now, but in a fever of anxiety concerning you and our children, whom I am about to leave. I must have patience. With a firm will, talent, and God's blessing, all will be well. . . . I embrace you very tenderly. Kiss our children for me.

Wergeland's celebrated poems to Ole Bull were published at this time, and, like Welhaven's, are valued as among the finest lyrics in the Norse literature.<sup>1</sup>

Ole Bull landed in Boston, in November, 1843, and went directly on to New York. His belief in the sturdy common people of his own country and his love of freedom made him anticipate with great interest an acquaintance with a people who governed for themselves, and this acquaintance resulted in giving him greater hopes for his own land, which he proudly felt was able to show already the most liberal constitution of all the European monarchical governments. He was then and ever zealous to the utmost, that every precedent which had been favorable to the growing

<sup>1</sup> They are printed in the Appendix.

power of the Norse people, through their constitution, should be jealously guarded. He insisted that their only safety and good lay in a demand for a fuller sovereignty of the people, and in their better education for such power. To him, therefore, the interest of his first visit and sojourn in the American Republic was not confined to his profession. He was from the first, and to the last, an earnest student of republican government and institutions.

His friend R. B. Anderson writes of him:—

Extremes meet. Ole Bull was at once the most perfect cosmopolitan and the most zealous patriot. Having spent much of his time abroad in the various European countries and in America, he had thoroughly learned the peculiarities of all nationalities. He was a keen observer. Mastering quickly the various European vernaculars, and winning easily the hearts of the people, he became conversant with the political and social questions that agitate the different nations. He was earnest in proclaiming their merits, but usually silent as to their faults. His face would brighten at every evidence he found of progress toward freedom of thought and the establishment of liberal governments in the various monarchical countries of Europe.

Ole Bull's best thoughts were given to his own country, to Norway. During all the years of conquest in his profession, and all the honors bestowed upon him in foreign lands, he never forgot his dear "Gamle Norge."



He ever talked with loving tenderness of Norway's gray mountains. He was but four years old when the young Norway was born. When he went out into the world the names Norway and Norwegian were scarcely to be found in the European vocabularies, these terms having previously been absorbed by Denmark and Dane. With his fame and name, attention was everywhere called to the fact that Norway had cast off the yoke of Denmark, and asserted her right to exist as an independent nation; and when people saw Ole Bull they said, "A land that can foster such sons has an inalienable right to its independence."

His name was now to become a household word through the length and breadth of the United States. At first circumstances seemed unfavorable. There were already two violinists in New York — Vieuxtemps, who was assisted by the famous singer Madame Damoreau, and Artot. The French, loyal to their countrymen, made a formidable opposition, and many difficulties had to be encountered. Ole Bull gave his first concert as early as the 23d of November. The contest between the parties continued with much vigor; the fact that not a Frenchman was present at the Norwegian's first concert made it now a question between the French and Americans. The papers were filled with contributions in prose and in verse, witty epigrams, and cartoons. Victory soon inclined to Ole Bull. With his first

concert, he won the good-will of the Americans, and ever afterwards held it. His audiences kept growing, until he was obliged to play in larger halls than were intended for concert purposes, and oftentimes many were unable to gain admission. The rapidity with which he traveled, and the frequency of his performances, were also remarkable. As an illustration of this, we will give a list of his concerts for the month of December, 1843. After appearing in New York again on the 29th of November, he gave the following concerts in December : —

December 1. Philadelphia.	December 19. New York.
“ 3. New York.	“ 21. Baltimore.
“ 5. New York.	“ 23. Baltimore.
“ 7. Philadelphia.	“ 25. Washington.
“ 9. Philadelphia.	“ 26. Baltimore.
“ 12. New York.	“ 27. Washington.
“ 15. Philadelphia.	“ 28. Richmond.
“ 16. Philadelphia.	“ 29. Petersburg.
“ 18. New York.	“ 30. Richmond.

And up to 1879 many months of winter and spring, and sometimes nine months of a year, would show similar records of travel and work. It was not his fine physique alone that enabled him to bear the strain, but a rigid adherence to simple diet and habits, with an almost total abstinence from stimulants during the season of

work, and constant exercise in the open air during the summer vacation in Norway. He doubtless traveled more miles and was heard by a larger number of people than any other man among his contemporaries.

Mrs. Child's account of his New York concerts written for the *Boston Courier*, and published later in her "Letters from New York," will be of interest. She did not speak from the judgment of a cultivated musical ear. She analyzed and expressed the effects of Ole Bull's performance on the multitude.

In Mrs. Child's first letter, she says: —

I have twice heard Ole Bull. I scarcely dare to tell the impression his music made upon me. But, casting aside all fear of ridicule for excessive enthusiasm, I will say that it expressed to me more of the infinite than I ever saw, or heard, or dreamed of, in the realms of Nature, Art, or Imagination.

They tell me his performance is wonderfully skillful; but I have not enough of scientific knowledge to judge of the difficulties he overcomes. I can readily believe of him, what Bettina says of Beethoven, that "his spirit creates the inconceivable, and his fingers perform the impossible." He played on four strings at once, and produced the rich harmony of four instruments. His bow touched the strings as if in sport, and brought forth light leaps of sound, with electric rapidity, yet clear in their distinctness. He made his violin sing with flute-



like voice, and accompany itself with a guitar, which came in ever and anon like big drops of musical rain. All this I felt as well as heard without the slightest knowledge of *quartetto* or *staccato*. How he did it, I know as little as I know how the sun shines, or the spring brings forth its blossoms. I only know that music came from his soul into mine, and carried it upward to worship with the angels.

Oh, the exquisite delicacy of those notes ! Now tripping and fairy-like as the song of Ariel ; now soft and low as the breath of a sleeping babe, yet clear as a fine-toned bell ; now high as a lark soaring upward, till lost among the stars !

Noble families sometimes double their names, to distinguish themselves from collateral branches of inferior rank. I have doubled his, and in memory of the Persian nightingale have named him Ole Bulbul. . . .

When urged to join the throng who are following this star of the North, I coolly replied : " I never like lions ; moreover I am too ignorant of musical science to appreciate his skill ! " But when I heard this man, I at once recognized a power that transcends science, and which mere skill may toil after in vain. I had no need of knowledge to feel this subtle influence, any more than I needed to study optics to perceive the beauty of the rainbow. It overcame me like a miracle. I felt that my soul was for the first time baptized in music ; that my spiritual relations were somehow changed by it, and that I should henceforth be otherwise than I had been. I was so oppressed with " the exceeding weight of glory " that I drew my breath with difficulty.

As I came out of the building, the street sounds hurt me with their harshness. The sight of ragged boys and importunate coachmen jarred more than ever on my feelings. I wanted that the angels that had ministered to my spirit should attune theirs also. It seemed to me as if such music should bring all the world into the harmonious beauty of divine order. I passed by my earthly home and knew it not. My spirit seemed to be floating through infinite space. The next day I felt like a person who had been in a trance, seen heaven opened, and then returned to earth again.

This doubtless appears very excessive in one who has passed the enthusiasm of youth, with a frame too healthy and substantial to be conscious of nerves, and with a mind instinctively opposed to lion-worship. In truth it seems wonderful to myself; but so it was. Like a romantic girl of sixteen, I would pick up the broken string of his violin and wear it as a relic, with a half superstitious feeling that some mysterious magic of melody lay hidden therein.

I know not whether others were as powerfully wrought upon as myself; for my whole being passed into my ear, and the faces around me were invisible. But the exceeding stillness showed that the spirits of the multitude bowed down before the magician. While he was playing, the rustling of a leaf might have been heard; and when he closed, the tremendous bursts of applause told how the hearts of thousands leaped up like one.

His personal appearance increases the charm. He looks pure, natural, and vigorous, as I imagine Adam in

Paradise. His inspired soul dwells in a strong frame, of admirable proportions, and looks out intensely from his earnest eyes. Whatever may be his theological opinions, the religious *sentiment* must be strong in his nature ; for Teutonic reverence, mingled with impassioned inspiration, shines through his honest Northern face and runs through all his music. I speak of him as he appears while he and his violin converse together. When not playing there is nothing observable in his appearance, except genuine health, the unconscious calmness of strength in repose, and the most unaffected simplicity in dress and in manner. But when he takes his violin and holds it so caressingly to his ear to catch the faint vibration of its strings, it seems as if "the angels were whispering to him." As his fingers sweep across the strings, the angels pass into his soul, give him their tones, and look out from his eyes, with the wondrous beauty of inspiration. His motions sway to the music like a tree in the winds ; for soul and body chord. In fact "his soul is but a harp, which an infinite breath modulates ; his senses are but strings, which weave the passing air into rhythm and cadence."

If it be true, as has been said, that a person ignorant of the rules of music, who gives himself up to its influence, without knowing whence it comes or whither it goes, experiences, more than the scientific, the passionate joy of the composer himself in his moments of inspiration, then was I blest in my ignorance. While I listened, music was to my soul what the atmosphere is to my body ; it was the breath of my inward life. I felt more deeply than ever that music is the highest sym-



bol of the infinite and holy. I heard it moan plaintively over the discords of society, and the dimmed beauty of humanity. It filled me with inexpressible longing to see man at one with Nature and with God; and it thrilled me with joyful prophecy that the hope would pass into glorious fulfillment.

With renewed force I felt what I have often said, that the secret of creation lay in music. "A *voice* to light gave being." Sound led the stars into their places and taught chemical affinities to waltz into each others' arms.

"By one pervading spirit  
Of tones and numbers all things are controlled;  
As sages taught, where faith was found, to merit  
Initiation in that mystery old."

Some who never like to admit that the greatest stands before them say that Paganini played the "Carnival of Venice" better than his Norwegian rival. I know not. But if ever laughter ran along the chords of musical instrument with a wilder joy, if ever tones quarreled with more delightful dissonance, if ever violin frolicked with more capricious grace than Ole Bulbul's in that fantastic whirl of melody, I envy the ears that heard it. . . .

His reception in New York has exceeded all preceding stars. His first audience were beside themselves with delight, and the orchestra threw down their instruments in ecstatic wonder. Familiarity with his performance brings less excitement, but I think more pleasure.

From Richmond Ole Bull went to Charleston, and thence to New Orleans. He gave five con-

certs in that city at the same time that Vieuxtemps and Madame Damoreau were giving a series of soireés. The Spanish, English, and German papers rivaled the American in their friendly criticisms of his performances. After three concerts in Mobile, he returned again to New Orleans for two final concerts there.

An anecdote of one of his first Southern visits, told by the late Mr. Thomas R. Gould, the sculptor, is illustrative of his many curious adventures at that time. A large diamond in his violin bow, which had been given him by the Duke of Devonshire with the request that he should use it, had attracted the attention of a man, who came to him and told him that he wanted the stone. The violinist replied, that, as it was a gift, it had associations, and he could neither give it away nor sell it. "But I am going to have that stone!" said the man, as he began to draw his bowie knife from the collar of his coat; but the movement was parried by the musician's muscular arm, and the fellow was felled to the floor by a blow with the edge of the hand across his throat. "The next time I would kill you," said Ole Bull, with his foot on the man's chest, "but you may go now." On his release the fellow expressed his admiration for Ole Bull's dexterity and muscle, and asked him to accept the bowie knife, which

he had meant to use against him. This was not the only present of the kind he received — as five knives, four given him in the Southern States, and one in Spain, were kept among his curiosities at home, and sometimes drew from him a story of his adventures. He was often obliged, while in the South, to take the cash box, after his concerts, from one place to another, the banks being few and far between, and was finally warned by detectives of a gang of men who were following him for the sake of plunder. He had several encounters with them, and was more than once in serious danger. He writes at this time: —

My brave servant Henry watches over me as a father over a son. He always fears that I may be attacked by villains ; but I do not think I am in danger from any weaponed hand.

One more story will sufficiently illustrate his Southern and Western adventures. Going down the Mississippi, he met on the steamboat a party of half-savage men, colonists from the far West. While reading his newspaper he was accosted by one of the men, who had been sent as spokesman by his companions, with the request that the fiddler would take a drink with them, offering him a whiskey flask at the same time. “ I thank you,” said Ole Bull politely, “ but I never drink whis-



key." With a curse, the fellow asked if he was a teetotaler. "No, but whiskey is like poison to me." "If you can't drink, come and fight then!" The man's comrades had gathered round him meantime, and they all cried, "If you won't drink, you must fight. You look d—n strong; show us what you are good for." "A Norseman can fight as well as anybody when his blood is up, but I can't fight when my blood is cold, and why should I?" "You look like a strong fellow, and d—n it, you shall fight." Seeing no way of escape, Ole Bull quietly said, "Since you insist on testing my strength and there is no reason for fighting, I will tell you what I will do. Let any one of you take hold of me in any way he likes, and I'll wager that in half a minute he shall lie on his back at my feet." A big fellow was chosen, who stepped forward and grasped the violinist round the waist, but was instantly thrown over his head by a sudden wrench and lay senseless on the deck. Ole Bull now felt himself in a very uncomfortable position, for he saw one of the man's comrades draw his bowie knife, but was relieved when it was used only to open a flask. A good dose of its contents poured down his throat soon revived the fainting man, and his first question, "How the devil was I thrown down here?" was answered by a shout of laughter from his companions, in which he him-

self joined. He sprang to his feet, and after vainly trying to persuade Ole Bull to show him how he had thrown him, he said: "Take this knife home with you; you fight d—d well; you are as quick as lightning!" The artist heard of the same fellow later as having gone to an editor to call him to account for an adverse criticism on his playing, ready to fight for "the strongest fiddler he had ever seen, anyhow!"

Ole Bull now decided to visit Cuba, and landed in Havana. He there wrote two compositions on Cuban motives: "Agiaco Cubano," and "Recuerdos de la Habana," which he played at his last concert.

He wrote to his wife from New Orleans, January 24, 1844:—

All these days we have had summer weather, very warm but extremely damp; the atmosphere is very heavy, and my strings break constantly. . . . Yesterday I gave my last concert in New Orleans for this visit; I was overwhelmed with bouquets and flowers. I have practiced speech-making, and it goes better than one would think, as I have no facility in speaking English; but a firm will can accomplish much. . . . The French are still pursuing me, that they may hold up Vieuxtemps and Artot; they invent all manner of outrageous stories to lower me in the public estimation, but as yet without success. It is probable that these rumors will be circulated in Paris, with the same end in

view. Well, my dear, one must bear much malice and misrepresentation when he has become a public character, and you know I have already had my share ; but, at the same time, I have met with forbearance and generosity, and this ought not to be forgotten. My life has hitherto, as you know, been a most changeful one, and superhuman strength is sometimes needed to enable one to stand against such infamous attacks and — keep silence. But enough of this. . . . I am sorry you are not satisfied with the nurse Miette ; she is the only servant to whom I feel really indebted for the care she has given our children, and I believe that she loves us. Try to overlook little faults, which are of no consequence ; we must remember her good qualities, and the attachment she has shown us in the past. Give her my greetings, say that I am grateful for all the love she has shown our children up to this time, and that I thank her for what I know she will still do in the future. . . . My regards to the Vuillaumes. Say that when I return I desire to play in Paris. They shall see that I have not wasted my time during our separation. . . .

He also wrote of Havana as follows : —

I was advised to be very careful ; not to expose myself to the sun or moonlight, to keep quiet after dinner, and to eat no fruit in the evening. As I heeded this advice, I remained seven weeks in Havana without an attack of the yellow fever or the diseases raging there. I gave ten concerts, four in the principal theatre and six in the immense Tacon Theatre. To show the inhabitants how grateful I felt for their enthusiasm, I composed two



pieces, in which I introduced some of the most popular Cuban airs. I think you will like them. I was much excited and nearly beside myself when I composed and played them for a people so favored by nature and climate. The fairy-like and beautiful climate of the tropics surpasses all description. How strange to see an orchestra composed almost without exception of negroes and mulattoes ! Their faces recorded the sentiments and passion of the music, at times laughing, then weeping, and sometimes rolling their eyes in a melancholy fashion, as they turned their good-natured physiognomies to the audience, to their music stands, or towards me. They are the best musicians in all America ! In the "Polacca," which was demanded at nearly every concert, I was accompanied by picked players from the seven regimental bands in Havana.

But suddenly a dangerous conspiracy was discovered among the negroes ; they had planned to poison all the whites on the island ! The owners of several sugar and coffee plantations were murdered in the most barbarous manner ; nobody dared to go out after dark ; the soldiers killed people in the streets without warning, nor were they called to account for it. More than seven hundred negroes were shot by order of the governor. I had engaged support, and my expenses were four thousand francs a night. I considered myself fortunate not to lose money in the circumstances. But who could foresee such a catastrophe ? I exerted all my strength in that intense heat. I played with all possible animation, and truly the enthusiasm of the Havanese paid me amply for my exertions ! They sent me many beautiful

poems, and garlands enough to cover the stage ; one of the wreaths, with inscriptions, I have saved for you, my beloved. . . . I shall work for you and our children, and do all in my power to assure them a good education. This is a great and sacred duty, which gives me strength to brave all danger. From Havana I returned by sea to Charleston. I slept for a couple of hours exposed to the sun, and the consequence was that my whole body, a week after, was poisoned. My face was covered with a thick crust, and I suffered very much ; it was a miracle that I did not die on the spot ! But I treated myself with cold water, ate very little, took cold baths and much exercise. . . . I pray you not to have the least anxiety, since I am now well again.

From Charleston he went to Columbia and Norfolk, and thence by sea to Baltimore, giving concerts in each place. He then went direct to Boston, by way of New York, where Schubert (who had come with him from Hamburg as secretary) had him arrested for debt, though in reality Schubert was himself indebted to Ole Bull for the publication of his compositions. The arrest compelled Ole Bull to give security for \$5,000, and brought upon him a troublesome lawsuit, which was not decided till 1852, and then in his favor. He never received from Schubert a penny of the sum promised him for his compositions, which passed through many editions. This attempted detention was intended to prevent the artist's meeting

his engagements in Boston, but it rather benefited than injured him, so far as the public was concerned. He gave his concerts in Boston in the "Melodeon," which seated 2,000 persons, but the orchestra had to go on the stage to make room for more seats. The papers were filled with articles and anecdotes concerning his life and work. A visit which he made to a lady, too ill to attend his concerts, taking his violin and playing for her, was commented on; but to his countrymen at home, who knew how often he had done this, for the sick or poor, special mention of the incident seemed strange. The insane hospitals were often visited by him in the different cities, and he felt a real pleasure in seeing the delight that his playing gave the inmates.

No expression of thanks for a visit to the sick-room was ever more appreciative than the account written by Alice Cary of his coming one morning, after she was confined to her room during her last illness, and bringing the cheer and comfort of his voice and instrument. Her sensitive, beautiful face was radiant with a loving welcome, which kept bravely back the pain and weakness fast gaining the ascendancy. Fearing that this was to be his last sight of her, he resolved that he would share and soothe one of the many hours of pain and apprehension, which those noble and



lovely women were bearing so patiently. When he again visited this country, both Alice and Phebe Cary had passed away, leaving their friends how much the poorer for their loss!

Mrs. Mary Clemmer, in a letter recently received, says:—

My own first personal meeting with Ole Bull was at the house of Alice Cary; indeed, on that special evening she invited him expressly to give me the great pleasure of meeting him.

Before I saw him, she said: "In meeting Ole Bull I seem to renew my entire youth; not merely the years of youth, but all the freshness, fullness, rapturous sweetness of its impressions. I have the feeling that should I stay in his presence I could never grow old. It is many years since I have met any human being who could arouse in me such emotions." . . .

Recalling what the presence and music of Ole Bull were to Alice Cary in her comparative health and fullness of life, you can realize what they must have been to charm and uplift her spirit when, wistfully dropping human loves, with pathetic grief, yet with abiding faith, she stood at the very close of the valley of shadows, listening to his seraphic strains, sweet to pain, yet full of the promise and melody of heaven.

You may be sure, in the silence that came afterwards, *she* breathed out her swan-song to him.

Of this first visit to Boston and the many things written concerning it, none were of more interest,

perhaps, than this extract from Margaret Fuller's private journal, written in March, 1844, and sent by a friend afterwards to the artist: —

At six o'clock William and C—— came out with carriage to take me to the Ole Bull concert. The music this evening plunged me in anguish, and raised me to rapture. The "Mountains of Norway," and the "Siciliano e Tarantella" were the great pieces. The last is unlike anything I ever heard, and *how* he looked when he played it! When encored, he played, among other things, "On the Lake where drooped the Willow," and again, "The Last Rose of Summer." He loves that as I do. I could not sleep at all, and went up to C.'s room and wrote.

Evening. Ole Bull again. I am extremely happy in him. He is one of my kin. . . .

He played to-night, first, "Recollections of Havana." This begins with a great swelling movement in the orchestra, and then his part comes in like the under-song of thought. I do not know whether the piece was fine or not. I soon forgot it, and was borne away into the winged life. Being encored, he played "The Last Rose of Summer," and modulated into "Auld Robin Gray." These sweet simple strains of human tenderness become celestial in his violin; their individual expression is more, not less, definite by being thus purified. Next, a "Notturmo Amoroso," and, being encored, the "Adagio Religioso." Both were enchanting. I felt raised above all care, all pain, all fear, and every taint of vulgarity was washed out of the world!

From Boston he went to the chief towns of New England, New York, and Canada, returning to Bristol, R. I., for rest in the months of August and September. He there wrote down his musical thoughts of Niagara. He had spent many days at the falls at different times, and saw them in all lights — in sun and storm. One evening great forest fires added their blaze and glare to the silvery shimmer of the moonlit rapids, and the lurid light with the grand rush and roar of the waters made a deep impression upon him. His enjoyment was heightened during that visit by the society of Mr. George Ticknor and his family, whom he happened to meet there. He had already been hospitably received by Mr. Ticknor in Boston, and the notes of invitation preserved among his papers show that their intercourse at Niagara was of the same pleasant nature. The last winter he spent in Boston, when he again visited this house, so famous for its generous hospitality, and was kindly welcomed by the venerable hostess, grateful recollections of the eminent man and scholar, who had done so much to make him at home when a stranger crowded upon his memory.

While in Bristol Ole Bull had received a letter from the directors of the Musical Fund Society in Philadelphia, in which they asked him to appear



at their first concert for the season, and expressed the hope that he would make his terms as moderate as possible, as their object was to start a fund for the support of poor musicians. He returned a letter of thanks, and said "his only remuneration should be the honor of assisting so highly esteemed a society in its noble efforts." When they received this answer they resolved to strike a medal in his honor, and it was presented to him at the close of the concert.

The "Niagara," which he played for the first time in New York that winter of 1844, was disappointing to the general public, while the criticisms were favorable. It gradually came more into favor, and was well received on its first performance in Philadelphia. Another composition, "The Solitude of the Prairies," won a more immediate popular success, and had to be played at nearly every concert. A religious composition, "David's Psalm," was also much liked.

N. P. Willis wrote as follows of the "Niagara": —

We believe that we have heard a transfusion into music — not of "Niagara," which the audience seemed *bona-fide* to expect, but of the *pulses of a human heart at Niagara*. We had a prophetic boding of the result of calling the piece vaguely "Niagara," — the listener furnished with no "argument" as a guide through the

wilderness of "treatment" to which the subject was open. This mistake allowed, however, it must be said that Ole Bull has, genius-like, refused to misinterpret the voice within him — refused to play the charlatan, and "bring the house down" — *as he might well have done by any kind of "uttermost," from the drums and trumpets of the orchestra.*

The emotion at Niagara is all but mute. It is a "small, still voice" that replies within us to the thunder of waters. The musical mission of the Norwegian was to represent the insensate element *as it was to him* — to a human soul, stirred in its seldom reached depths by the call of power. It was the *answer* to Niagara that he endeavored to render in music — not the *call*!

After his December concerts in New York Ole Bull returned to Boston, where he gave several concerts, and revisited some of the New England towns. He then returned to New York, to give his last concert in that city for the season, at the Tabernacle, to an audience of 3500 people.

The criticisms from the papers of that date would be pronounced as extravagant as Mrs. Child's letters, while her accounts are more vividly descriptive of the intense excitement which prevailed. Another quotation from her is therefore given — from the letter dated December 24, 1844: —

You ask me for my impressions of Ole Bull's "Niag-

ara." It is like asking an *Æolian* harp to tell what the great organ of Freyburg does. But since you are pleased to say that you value my impressions because they are always my own, and not another person's — because they are spontaneous, disinterested, and genuine, — I will give you the tones as they breathed through my soul, without anxiety to have them pass for more than they are worth. . . .

Grand as I thought "Niagara" when I first heard it, it opened upon me with increasing beauty when I heard it repeated. I then observed many exquisite and graceful touches, which were lost in the magnitude of the first impression. The multitudinous sounds are bewildering in their rich variety.

"The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep."

"The whispering air

Sends inspiration from the rocky heights,  
And dark recesses of the caverned rocks ;  
The little rills, and waters numberless,  
Blend their notes with the loud streams."

There is the pattering of water-drops, gurglings, twitterings, and little gushes of song.

"The leaves in myriads jump and spring,  
As if, with pipes and music rare,  
Some ROBIN GOODFELLOW were there,  
And all the leaves, in festive glee,  
Were dancing to the minstrelsy."

It reminded me of a sentence in the "*Noctes Ambrosianæ*," beautifully descriptive of its prevailing character: "It keeps up a bonnie wild musical sough, like that o' swarming bees, spring-startled birds, and the voices of a hundred streams, some wimpling awa' ower the



Elysian meadows, and ithers roaring at a distance frae the clefts."

The sublime waterfall is ever present with its echoes, but present in a calm, contemplative soul. One of the most poetic minds I know, after listening to this music, said to me : "The first time I saw Niagara, I came upon it through the woods, in the clear sunlight of a summer's morning ; and these tones are a perfect transcript of my emotions !" In truth, it seems to me a perfect disembodied poem ; a most beautiful mingling of natural sounds with the reflex of their impressions on a refined and romantic mind. This serene grandeur, this pervading beauty, which softens all the greatness, gave the composition its greatest charm to those who love poetic expression in music ; but it renders it less captivating to the public in general than they had anticipated. Had it been called a Pastorale composed within hearing of Niagara, their preconceived ideas would have been more in accordance with its calm, bright majesty.

She also mentions his "Prairie Solitude," and says : —

A friend acquainted with prairie scenery said it brought vividly before her those "dream-like, bee-sung, murmuring, and musical plains."

Many who have hitherto been moderate in their enthusiasm about Ole Bull recognize in these new compositions more genius than they supposed him to possess. Tastefully intertwined Fantasias, or those graceful musical garlands, Rondos, might be supposed to indicate merely a pleasing degree of talent and skill. But those

individuals must be hard to convince who do not recognize the presence of genuine inspiration in the earnest tenderness of the "Mother's Prayer," that sounds as if it were composed at midnight, alone with the moon; in the mad, wild life of the "Tarantella"; in the fiery, spirit-stirring eloquence of the "Polacca Guerriera"; in the deep spiritual melody of the "Prairie Solitude"; and in the serene majesty of "Niagara."

If I appear to speak with too much decision, it is simply because my own impressions are distinct and strong, and I habitually utter them alike without disguise and without pretension. In the presence of mere skill, I know not what to say. It may please me somewhat; but whether it is more or less excellent than some other thing I cannot tell. But bring me into the presence of genius, and I know it by rapid intuition as quick as I know a sunbeam. I cannot tell how I know it. I simply say, This is genius, as I say, This is a sunbeam.

It is an old dispute, that between genius and criticism, and probably will never be settled, for it is one of the manifold forms of conservatism and innovation. In all departments of life, genius is on the side of progress, and learning on the side of established order. Genius comes a Prophet from the future to guide the age onward. Learning, the Lawgiver, strives to hold it back upon the past. But the Prophet always revolutionizes the laws, for thereunto was he sent. Under his powerful hand, the limitations gradually yield and flow, as metals melt into new forms at the touch of fire.

"Over everything stands its dæmon, or soul," says Emerson; "and as the *form* of the thing is reflected to

the eye, so is the *soul* of the thing reflected by a melody. The sea, the mountain ridge, Niagara, superexist in precantations, which sail like odors in the air; and when any man goes by with ears sufficiently fine, he overhears them, and endeavors to write them down without diluting or depraving them." Thanks to "old, ever-young Norway," she has sent us her finely-organized son, to overhear the voices and echoes, and give them to us in immortal music. . . .

America, in taking the Norwegian minstrel thus warmly to her heart, receives more than she can give. His visit has done, and will do, more than any other cause to waken and extend a love of music throughout the country; and where love exists, it soon takes form in science. All things that are alive are born of the heart.

From New York and Brooklyn he went to Philadelphia, and then, after visiting Louisville and Wilmington, he returned to New Orleans, where he gave five concerts in the Great Armory Hall.

While in New Orleans, he gave a banquet to his friends at the St. Charles Hotel. Late in the evening a stranger was announced, who had just arrived from Europe, Mr. Alexander, the prestidigitateur. He was cordially received by Ole Bull. Alexander soon suggested to his host that it would give him pleasure to entertain the company with some of his tricks, if, in return, he might hear



Ole Bull play. After he had astonished the company with his sleight-of-hand marvels, he turned to Ole Bull and asked to see the silver medal presented him in Philadelphia. On opening the case it was found to contain only a piece of lead; and when the violin was taken from its case, the strings were found broken, and the instrument cracked as it was lifted out. Ole Bull turned pale, as he feared his own instrument had been tampered with, but soon discovered that both his violin and medal were safe. He played far into the night for his friends, who insisted that they had not heard him do so well in public.

During the spring and summer months concerts were given in every place of note in the Mississippi Valley. The Mammoth Cave in Kentucky was also visited. At one point in the cave the artist was too venturesome, and his rashness nearly cost him his life. He had gone on in advance of the guide, and was near falling into one of the subterranean rivers, his light being extinguished as he crawled through an opening which at one point seemed too narrow to permit of his going forward or retreating. Fortunately, he had scaled the narrow ledge in the darkness, and was quite unconscious of the chasm on the verge of which he had been creeping till lights were brought, when he found that one false move

would have precipitated him into the depths. He played in the cave, and the music had a weird, unearthly sound, as it was echoed through those eerie, uncanny chambers.

In St. Louis the only concert hall belonged to a private gentleman. It was lighted by oil lamps, as gas had not been introduced. A local paper relates the following incident:—

The hall was crowded by the élite of this old French city; the audience was enjoying the last encore, when a sudden draught from an open window extinguished one of the lamps, which, smoking and spluttering, sent a puff of smoke and soot over Ole Bull's face and person. Absorbed in his performance, he did not notice what had happened, but having finished, and taken out his pocket handkerchief to wipe his forehead, alas!—what a change was there in the appearance of poor Ole! His face was black, his pocket handkerchief, his hands, his violin—all black! Looking at his violin, he exclaimed, "My poor fiddle, I am *so* sorry for you!"

In October, 1845, Ole Bull returned to New York and Boston, to give a series of concerts before his departure for Europe. The knowledge that he was so soon to leave the country made the rush for places greater than ever. A new composition, to the "Memory of Washington," a descriptive piece, was much liked then, and was found to be effective when played the last time

in 1876, in Boston. On the 30th of October he gave his last concert in New York, in the Broadway Tabernacle, to an audience of more than 4000 people. The proceeds were given by the artist to a fund for the widows and orphans of Masons. During the intermission between the parts of the programme, he was presented with the regalia of the Masons of the State of New York. The Secretary concluded his long presentation speech with, "You will be followed by the 'mother's prayer' and the warm gratitude of the fatherless. . . . The world will learn that the strongest bond is the union of free and honest men in the indissoluble tie of brotherly love."

The warmth of feeling shown by the audience, in response to the words spoken, deeply touched Ole Bull. He said in a low voice:—

"My homage to the memory of Washington is not mine alone; it is the homage of the whole Norse folk that is heard through me. The principles for which this people drew the sword and shed their blood inspired the Norwegians, and strengthened them in their struggle for independence. The admiration of the Norsemen for American institutions and for their great founder was early implanted in my breast, and admiration for Washington and love of liberty were indelibly impressed upon the tablets of my heart."



In November he gave concerts in Philadelphia and Baltimore, and was just preparing to leave America when he received a letter signed by the principal musicians of New York, requesting him to visit that city once more before he left. He consented to do so, and appointed the 26th of November for the concert, to which he invited all the inmates of the New York Asylum for the Blind, by the following letter:—

ASTOR HOUSE, N. Y., *November 18, 1845.*

MY FRIENDS!—I have heard that many of you are fond of music. In a few days I am to leave America, and if I, before my departure, could afford you some pleasure, it would be to me a pleasant thing to remember. If, therefore, all of you, pupils and teachers, will come and hear me next Wednesday, I will do my best to entertain you. It would be my greatest desire to be able for a moment to make you forget that you are unable to enjoy the beauty of the flowers.

Your sympathetic friend,

OLE B. BULL.

To the Members of the Asylum for the Blind.

This invitation was accepted, and the house was filled two hours before the performance began. Among the manifestations of regard he received from the great audience must be mentioned a song written for the occasion and sung by a choir of the pupils from the Blind Asylum, after

an address of thanks. From his first appearance in the country to the last, he was welcomed with more than cordiality and kindness. He left the shores of the New World feeling that his love of liberty and republican government was strengthened, though he could not help recognizing their unequal distribution in the United States. Slavery could not but be hateful to him; its evil effects on the whites seemed to him as apparent as on the blacks.

He wrote to his wife November 30, 1845:—

Soon after you receive these lines you will have me with you. I leave Wednesday, December 3, on the Baltimore for Havre. There are several reasons for my preference to go by a sailing vessel. First, its movements are much pleasanter; you haven't the smoke or jar of the machinery. I shall, too, avoid unpacking my cases in England; and lastly, I need some rest after my exertions and late hours. I have been greatly benefited by my intercourse with noble and distinguished men and women here. My relation to the Americans is that of an adopted son. . . . My farewell concerts in Boston, in Philadelphia, and especially in New York, were remarkable for the regret which the people expressed at my departure, and I was deeply touched.

The *New York Herald* wrote as follows of his American visit:—

The unparalleled enthusiasm awakened by him everywhere and his popularity in every city were most re-

markable. He gave his first concert in New York in the Park Theatre, and the house was crowded ; with the same success he gave six more in the same hall. Then by the advice of his friends he went to the Tabernacle, which seats 4000 people, and here too he had a full house. On one occasion he played to 7000 people for the American Institute in Niblo's Garden.

From New York, Ole Bull traveled through the United States and Canada and a part of the West Indies, and everywhere called forth the same tremendous enthusiasm and overwhelming joy. He traveled in these countries more than 100,000 miles, and played in every city of importance. From his first landing till his departure he gave over 200 concerts, of which some netted him only \$200, while others, as for instance those in New York, netted him over \$3000. Estimating them as low as \$400 on the average, his concerts must have given him a profit of \$80,000. Besides he contributed more than \$20,000 by concerts to charitable institutions, and to artists who assisted him he paid \$15,000.

No artist has ever visited our country and received so many honors. Poems by the hundred have been written to him ; gold vases, jewels, medals, etc., have been presented to him by various corporations. His whole remarkable appearance in this country is really unexampled in glory and fame. He came from Norway, the most northern country of Europe, the birth-place of Odin, and inspired all America. His tender farewell composition in New York made the tears come to many eyes. . . . After having thus for over two



years won triumph upon triumph and an abundance of gold and fame in the New World, Ole Bull left on December 3d for Havre, whence he intended to go to Paris. . . .

Mrs. Child's and Mrs. Botta's good-byes seem most fitting to close this account of Ole Bull's first American trip. The former is as follows:—

Where on this planet is a place so sublimely appropriate as the rocky coast of Norway, to the newly-invented Æolian sea-signals? Metal pipes, attached to floating buoys, are placed among the breakers, and through these do the winds lift their warning voices, louder and louder, as the sea rages more and more fiercely. Here is a magnificent storm-organ, on which to play, "Wind of the winter night, whence comest thou?"

On this coast has Ole Bull, from childhood, heard the waves roar their mighty bass to the shrill soprano of the winds, and has seen it all subside into sun-flecked, rippling silence. There, in view of lofty mountains, sea-circled shores, and calm, deep, blue fjords, shut in by black precipices and tall green forests, has he listened to "the fresh mighty throbbings of the heart of Nature." Had he lived in the sunny regions of Greece or Italy, instead of sea-girt Norway, with its piled-up mountains, and thundering avalanches, and roaring waterfalls, and glancing auroras, and the shrill whispering of the northern wind through broad forests of pines, I doubt whether his violin could ever have discoursed such tumultuous life, or lulled itself to rest with such deep-breathing tenderness.

I know not what significance the Nordmen have in the world's spiritual history; but it must be deep. Our much boasted Anglo-Saxon blood is but a rivulet from the great Scandinavian sea. The Teutonic language, "with its powerful primeval words — keys to the being of things" — is said by the learned to have come from the East, the source from which both light and truth dawned upon the world. This language has everywhere mixed itself with modern tongues, and forms the bone and nerve of our own. To these Nordmen, with their deep reverence, their strong simplicity, their wild, struggle-loving will, we owe the invention of the organ, and of Gothic architecture. In these modern times, they have sent us Swedenborg, that deep in-seeing prophet, as yet imperfectly understood, either by disciples or opponents; and Frederika Bremer, gliding like sun-warmth into the hearts of many nations; and Thorwaldsen, with his serene power and majestic grace; and Beethoven, with aspirations that leap forth beyond the "flaming bounds of time and space;" and Ole Bull, with the primeval harmonies of creation vibrating through his soul in infinite variations. Reverence to the Nordmen; for assuredly their strong free utterance comes to us from the very *heart* of things. . . .

Wordsworth thus describes the young maiden, to whom Nature was "both law and impulse:" —

"She shall lean her ear  
In many a secret place,  
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
And Beauty, born of murmuring sound,  
Shall pass into her face."

The engraved likeness of Ole Bull often reminds me of these lines. It seems listening to one of his own sweet strains of melody, passing away, away, — and vanishing into the common air, fine as the mist scattered afar by the fountains. The effect, thus transmitted in form by the artist, reproduces its cause again ; for, as I look upon it, a whirling spray of sound goes dancing through my memory, to the clink of fairy castanets. When I look at Domenichino's "Cumæan Sibyl," and Allston's wonderful picture of the "Lady Hearing Music," my soul involuntarily listens, and sometimes hears faint, wandering strains of melody. . . .

This spiritual expression of music is heard in very different degrees by different people, and by some not at all. One man remarked, as he left Ole Bull's concert, "Well, there is no such thing as getting a dollar's worth of music out of a fiddle, in three hours." Of the same concert, a man of thorough musical science, and deep feeling for his musical art, writes to me thus : "Ole Bull has certainly impressed me as no man ever impressed me before. The most glorious sensation I ever had was to sit in one of his audiences, and feel that all were elevated to the same pitch with myself. My impulse was to speak to every one as to an intimate friend. The most indifferent person was a living soul to me. The most remote or proud I did not fear or despise. In that element they were all accessible, nay, all worth reaching. This surely was the highest testimony to his great art and his great soul."

An eloquent writer, who publishes under the fictitious signature of "John Waters," describes his first impres-



sions of Liszt's piano-playing, with an enthusiasm that would doubtless seem very ridiculous to many who listened to the same sounds. He says that, "with blow after blow upon the instrument with his whole force, he planted large columnar masses of sound, like the Giant's Causeway. The instrument rained, hailed, thundered, moaned, whistled, shrieked round those basaltic columns, in every cry that the tempest can utter in its wildest paroxysms of wrath. . . . Then we were borne along, through countless beauties of rock and sky and foliage, to a grotto, by the side of which was a fountain that seemed one of the Eyes of the Earth, so large and darkly brilliant was it, so deep and so serene. Here we listened to the voices rather than the songs of birds, when the music by degrees diminished and ceased."

A lady to whom he spoke of the concert acknowledged that the sounds had brought up very similar pictures to her soul ; but probably not ten of the large audience listened in such a spirit. That it was thus received by *any*, shows that it was *in* the music, whether the composer was aware of it or not ; and genius only can produce those magical effects, even on a few.

To Him who made the ear a medium of pleasure to the soul, I am humbly grateful for delight in sweet sounds ; and still more deeply am I grateful that the spiritual sense of music is more and more opened to me. I have joy in the consciousness of growth, as I can imagine a flower might be pleased to feel itself unfolding and expanding to the sunlight. This *expressiveness* of music no man ever revealed to me like Ole Bull, and therefore, in my joy and gratitude, I strive, like a de-

lighted child, to bring all manner of garlands and jewels wherewith to crown his genius.

Here is a wreath of wild flowers to welcome his return :—

Welcome to thee, Ole Bull !

A welcome warm and free !

For heart and memory are full

Of thy rich minstrelsy.

'T is music for the tuneful rills

To flow to from the verdant hills ;

Music such as first on earth

Gave to the Aurora birth.

Music for the leaves to dance to ;

Music such as sunbeams glance to ;

Treble to the ocean's roar,

On some old resounding shore.

Silvery showers from the fountains ;

Mists unrolling from the mountains ;

Lightning flashing through a cloud,

When the winds are piping loud.

Music full of warbling graces,

Like to birds in forest places,

Gushing, trilling, whirring round,

Mid the pine-trees' murm'ring sound.

The martin scolding at the wren,

Which sharply answers back again,

Till across the angry song  
Strains of laughter run along.

Now leaps the bow with airy bound,  
Like dancer springing from the ground,  
And now like autumn wind comes sighing,  
Over leaves and blossoms dying.

The lark now singeth from afar  
Her carol to the morning-star,  
A clear soprano rising high,  
Ascending to the inmost sky.

And now the scattered tones are flying,  
Like sparks in midnight darkness dying ;  
Gems from rockets in the sky,  
Falling — falling — gracefully.

Now wreathed and twined — but still evolving  
Harmonious oneness in revolving ;  
Departing with the faintest sigh,  
Like ghost of some sweet melody.

As on a harp with golden strings,  
All nature breathes to thee,  
And with her thousand voices sings  
The infinite and free.

Of beauty she is lavish ever ;  
Her urn is always full ;  
But to our earth she giveth never  
Another Ole Bull.



Mrs. Botta's poem is entitled

A FAREWELL TO OLE BULL.

There was a fountain in my heart  
Whose depths had not been stirred ;  
A thirst for music in my soul  
My ear had never heard ;

A feeling of the incomplete  
To all bright things allied ;  
A sense of something beautiful,  
Unfilled, unsatisfied.

But, waked beneath thy master-hand,  
Those trembling chords have given  
A foretaste of that deep, full life  
That I shall know in heaven.

In that resistless spell, for once,  
The vulture of unrest,  
That whets its beak upon my heart,  
Lies charmed within my breast.

Pale Memory and flushed Hope forget ;  
Ambition sinks to sleep ;  
And o'er my spirit falls a bliss  
So perfect that I weep.

Oh, stranger ! though the farewell notes  
Now on the breeze may sigh,  
Yet, treasured in our thrilling hearts,  
Their echo shall not die.

Thou 'st brought us from thy Northern home  
Old Norway's forest tones,  
Wild melodies from ancient lands,  
Of palaces and thrones.

Take back the "Prairie's Solitude,"  
The voice of that dry sea  
Whose billowy breast is dyed with flowers,  
Made audible by thee.

Take back with thee what ne'er before  
To Music's voice was given,  
The anthem that "Niagara" chants  
Unceasingly to heaven ;

The spirit of a people waked  
By Freedom's battle cry ;  
The "Memory of their Washington,"  
Their song of victory.

Take back with thee a loftier fame,  
A prouder niche in art,  
Fresh laurels from our virgin soil,  
And take — a nation's heart !

The wife and children of Ole Bull awaited his coming in Paris. His letters make frequent mention of his children, for whom he had many pet names, and he delighted to tell his friends about them. In one of his last letters from New York he said :—

I have dreamed of Alexander and Thorvald, and my soul is filled with grief — for they would not recognize me. . . . I must play to-morrow, and this kills one.<sup>1</sup> I shall soon come to you myself, and you will hear more from my own lips than I will trust to this cold paper.

It is easy to imagine the pleasure of the meeting, — and also the pain, since he could not yet feel that his independence was sufficiently secured to justify him in giving up his professional tours. He had not received the proportion of the returns from his two years' work that was fairly his due. He had left, as he habitually did, his business settlements till the last moment, and often trusted his funds in what proved to be unsafe hands. As a consequence, he was still obliged to think of the pecuniary results of his work.

In the spring of 1846 he appeared several times in Paris, and on the 19th of April he gave a concert at the Italian Opera. The following is an extract from an advance notice in the *Corsaire Satan*, of the 15th of April: —

Each year public opinion, having fluttered about for a time, at last settles upon an artist, who, to use an English phrase, becomes the lion of the season. This happy advantage has been accorded this year to Ole Bull. After the extraordinary success which he had attained at Roger's entertainments, he could not leave Paris without giving a grand concert at the Théâtre

<sup>1</sup> He had just heard of the death of their youngest son.



Italien. This is a custom made fashionable by Liszt, Thalberg, Madame Pleyel, — in fact, by all great artists ; a fashion which some lesser stars with more boldness than success have followed. Ole Bull was not too sanguine in regard to his strength, for all the tickets are already sold. This part of the problem has been solved ; to solve the other half he only needs to play, as he has done at the Grand Opéra, and the Opéra Comique, and his victory will be both brilliant and complete. . . . Ole Bull's violin does not pipe and shriek like those of some of his confrères, who whine when they pretend to sing ; his bow really possesses something magic and inspired. It is the human voice in its most exalted expression.

The following criticism of the performance, by P. A. Fiorentino, appeared in *Le Constitutionnel* for the 22d of April : —

Ole Bull has given a grand concert at the Théâtre Italien. All the Norse courage and daring was needed in venturing to offer the public a very battle of five violin pieces. What fire and what power ! But a favorable result justifies the greatest rashness, and Ole Bull, in the course of the evening, showed us that he was not over-sanguine in regard to his powers. He first played variations of a diabolic difficulty and originality on Bellini's aria : "L'amo, ah, l'amo, e m'è più cara." It was as if the spirits of hell, sunk in dark despair, must love and long for the light of heaven. Paganini's "Carnival," which, as by magic, carries us to *Via del Corso*, in the very midst of the ringing laughter and

joyful abandon of the Maccolettians, was repeated at the emphatic demand of the audience. "A Mother's Prayer," composed by the artist beneath the quiet arches of the cloister of Santa Maria, is a great and severe piece, full of mystic tenderness and religious warmth. Finally, the "Polacca Guerriera," which we had twice heard before, seemed to us more and more to merit the enthusiastic reception the public is everywhere giving it. Ole Bull sang splendidly last night. He was applauded and recalled so many times, that he might have believed himself in Venice, Florence, or Naples.

In May Ole Bull was playing in Bordeaux, to the rapturous applause of that city. Before his departure, he gave a banquet at the Hotel de la Paix, to which the *Courrier de la Gironde* refers as follows:—

The apartments which Ibrahim Pacha had occupied a fortnight previous were fitted up for the occasion, and were truly regal in the elegance of their appointments. The large salon, especially, was dazzling; and the brilliant toilets of the fairest ladies of the city heightened the effect, as they clustered about the piano. All persons in Bordeaux distinguished for talent, rank, or wealth, participated in the reception. A quintette, by Mozart, was played by the artist with our ablest amateurs, and a duet for piano and violin, by Mayseder, was accompanied by a lady. Compositions and improvisations of the violinist followed. As a host, Ole Bull was a prince; one of the most distinguished ladies present remarked, when she saw him receive with the ex-

quisite courtesy and aristocratic charm of manner peculiarly his own, that Ole Bull seemed to her that evening a second Count of Monte Christo. . . . No artist has ever been received with so much distinction and enthusiasm in Bordeaux.

At the end of the month he filled a most successful engagement in Toulouse, where a *fête lyrique* was given in his honor by the residents of that city at the Théâtre du Capitole. In Lyons he gave a concert for the benefit of a poor actress, who, friendless, and unable to obtain an engagement, had been driven in her despair to attempt suicide.

In July he appeared in Marseilles, where he had full houses, although he complains in his letters that, as his concerts had not been well announced or arranged in advance, his profits were less than they should have been. His financial success could not always be measured by his artistic triumphs. The Marseilles *Le Sud* said of him: —

His place is between Paganini and Liszt. If we were asked what distinction we would make between the young Norse artist and the immortal Genoese virtuoso, we should answer, that, so far as talent is concerned, the question is a difficult one. Who among us remembers with sufficient distinctness the marvels performed by Paganini's bow in this place ten years ago, to be able to determine with exactness whether Ole Bull overcomes equally great difficulties? It is possible that at



certain moments Paganini's manner was even more wonderful and powerful; but nothing is more certain than that Ole Bull is his equal, if not his superior, in beauty, warmth, tenderness, and variety. When, on the other hand, we leave out of the account purely technical questions, which even artists themselves cannot decide, it must be admitted that admiration is more readily accorded to the frank, modest, unselfish young man, who has given evidence, in many ways, of an exalted nobility of character. . . .

A no less electric enthusiasm broke forth again and again, when the artist played the "Carnival of Venice,"—his own variations. One can hardly imagine with what power of originality Ole Bull has mastered this favorite theme of Paganini's. He is especially brilliant in the humorous part. If we remember right, Paganini did not produce that natural and gushing sprightliness in the conversation between Punchinello and the policeman. It is strange enough, that the Northman has been able to put more sly cunning and rollicking fun into the scene than the Italian Mephistopheles. Ole Bull ends this composition with a bird-song, which is the most surprising imitation one can imagine. Here his instrument is no more a violin, but a gathering of the most charming song-birds.

Ole Bull here met frequently with his friend Hans Andersen, who was visiting Marseilles.

In the autumn of 1847 he crossed the Mediterranean to Algiers, joining his friend General Youssuf, and they had many an exciting adven-

ture on their journey across the desert. He had his violin with him and played for the officers in the little town of Milianah. His audience was a singularly mixed one, being composed of Europeans, Arabs, and negroes; and the expressions of admiration or wide-mouthed astonishment which followed his playing were in keeping. The violin case had been given by General Youssuf, with strict instructions, to the keeping of two Arabs; they regarded it with a holy awe, and handled it with the greatest care, too proud of their trust to permit any one to come near it.

From Algiers the artist went to Spain. The melodies and songs of that country charmed him, and he declared them to be the most beautiful in the world. He was delighted too with the language, and often spoke of its admirable adaptiveness to express the finest shadings of thought, combined with strength and sonorousness.

During the festivities attending the marriage of Isabella II. with Francisco d'Assiz, and Donna Fernanda with the Duc de Montpensier, he gave concerts in Madrid. He composed by request "La Verbena de San Juan," which he dedicated to the Queen, who offered him a general's commission. She thought, no doubt, that the brilliant dress of a staff-officer would become him, but he declined the honor. Her majesty presented

him a flower composed of one hundred and forty brilliants in the form of a verbená, and the order of Charles III. in brilliants; also the Portuguese order of Christus.

From a long notice in the *Español* of the 15th of October the following is taken:—

It is now fifteen years since we heard Ole Bull for the first time in Paris. He was very young then, but gave promise of becoming what he now is, a great violinist. We also knew Paganini, and can assure our readers that of all the violinists we have heard, Ole Bull nearest approaches him in his performance. Besides his wonderful execution, only to be accomplished by an arm of iron like his, he draws from his instrument a powerful and vigorous tone; he plays the andante to perfection, and besides clearness and precision he makes his instrument sing, a quality without which all his other accomplishments would be colorless. This violinist has created the greatest sensation ever known in Madrid; and his triumph is all the greater for coming as he did unheralded by the trumpets of fame. He has performed pieces of great length, which were not fantasias or variations on known operas, of which the Spanish are fond; and as instrumental concerts are not much liked here, we feared that the efforts and skill of Ole Bull would not be duly recompensed; but his immense talent very soon commanded the sympathies of the public and compelled their applause. The Norwegian artist deserves no less praise as a composer than as a performer. His great "Concerto" has all the severity and qualities of that form of composition. . . .



The following is from the Valencia *Fenix* of June 27, 1847:—

The violin in Ole Bull's hands is a perfect orchestra, and an impetuous torrent of delightful harmonies ; it seems as if the strings multiply themselves, and, obedient to the inspiration of the artist, they as well imitate the human voice as the trumpet of the warrior, the song of the maiden, or the lyre of the poet. We have heard nothing so magical, seducing, and astonishing.

The delirious public offered him an ovation such as no other artist had received here before . . .

From Spain he returned to Paris, bringing with him seven pictures by old Spanish masters, one of them from the 10th century, and two fine violins. *En route*, he gave concerts in Bordeaux and Nantes. His letters spoke of the Spaniards, their music, their boundless hospitality, and the dangers of travel in the mountains on account of bandits. Because of this he returned by sea to Marseilles, and rejoined his wife, spending with her some months in the country, at St. Michel, near Paris.

During the revolution of 1848, he went, at the head of the Norwegians in Paris, to the Palais de Justice, and presented a Norwegian flag to President Lamartine, with an address, as evidence of their sympathy. This flag was preserved in the Hotel de Ville till that building was destroyed by

the Commune in 1871. He also gave a concert in Paris for the wounded of the revolution.

He remained in that city most of the summer, working upon and studying the construction of the violin, with his friend, the great violin-maker Vuillaume. The following extract from a letter of Vuillaume's may be of interest here:—

Since you left us so long ago, I have wished twenty times to write to you. I have had many things of all sorts to tell you—very important, as you may imagine, and which I have promised myself much pleasure in communicating. Something or other has always prevented my doing this; but to-day here I am in the country for four hours, and I improve the opportunity to chat with you. . . .

You are aware that my daughter Emilie is married to Alard, and we are all well pleased with the match. You do not know him, but when you come you shall make his acquaintance. . . .

When you were in Paris I showed you some instruments with which I had taken extraordinary pains, and you liked them. I have since kept up this kind of work, and had made some quartettes and double-basses for the Exposition; but finding nothing novel in all this finished work, I resolved to make something colossal—an *octobasse*! It is the giant of bow instruments. I have never seen nor heard of anything like it. It is made exactly, in all its proportions, like a double-bass, but it is twelve feet in height. It is strung with three enormous chords, which give the notes *re, sol, ut*. The

sound is clear, deep, and sonorous, nothing at all like the dull and thick tone of the ordinary double-bass. The fingering is done by means of mechanism connected with keys at the lower end of the finger-board, which the performer, standing on a stool, easily reaches with the left hand, while with the right he draws a big bow across the strings. The use of this instrument must be reserved for the grander effects of harmony. It is like the sub-bass of the organ. I believe I have added a new and powerful voice to the family of instruments. . . .

Give me some news of yourself, of your family, of your plans, what your children are doing — all this will interest me. . . .

I have just arranged a room for my collection of old instruments. I have already many interesting specimens, to which I shall add as occasion offers. The finish and the furniture of the room are all in old carved oak of the time of Francis I. . . . You see I am not afraid of tiring you with all these details. I hope to bore you still more in showing you all my relics when you come. . . .

In October Ole Bull returned to Norway and bought a place near Christiansand, having decided to remain for a time in his own country. He gave many concerts, and was everywhere enthusiastically received. His success determined him to attempt to found a National Theatre. The country had, up to that time, depended upon Danish plays, Danish actors, and Danish musicians. He



wanted a national drama and the national music, and for this he spent his money and his time without stint.

It should be remarked, perhaps, here, that Ole Bull was too apt to consider that loyalty to an undertaking meant a confidence and interest so entire as not only to demand the giving all that he had, but often the burning of his ships behind him in the neglect of his own legitimate work. It was characteristic of him all his life, to stake all without reserve, and to feel that he could not hope for success unless he was willing to do this. His great undertakings, as a rule, failed only in their benefit to himself. Almost without exception, they have resulted in permanent good, and that which lay nearest his heart he lived to see recognized by his countrymen. The seed of national feeling and national dramatic and musical work he had planted grew in his time, and bore the best fruit. Jonas Lie says: —

With all the influence which his mighty name gave him, Ole Bull demanded the realization of a national drama. What Waldemar Thrane had begun in his Norse Opera should be continued in a development of the national music ; whatever of dramatic art had been previously borrowed from Denmark should be replaced by what was purely Norwegian. Beside the current which swept through the country from the French Revolution

at that time, there were other circumstances which also tended to awaken a national feeling, since, beside Ole Bull, there were several Norse painters at home, because of the troubles abroad. Among these were Tidemand and Gude. To these exiled artists, the return home was like a re-baptism of patriotism, and their presence inspired the people in their turn. The air was filled with ideal demands, and a movement was inaugurated which marked an epoch in our National Art, as well as in the development of our literature.

A Norse theatre with a Norse orchestra was what Ole Bull, in his enthusiasm, determined to realize in his birth-place, Bergen. He appointed committees, engaged actors, built and furnished a theatre. He himself led the orchestra, worked up public sentiment, and inspired the press, until at last, on the 2d of January, 1850, his National Theatre was opened with a representation which was acknowledged, by his opponents even, to have been a surprising success.<sup>1</sup>

The hasty, animated lines which he wrote to his wife that day, in which he mentions his exertions, his many disappointments, and his persevering, energetic hope for the undertaking, strike one very forcibly.

<sup>1</sup> Among the correspondence of this period is a long letter from the well-known Norse poet, Aasmund O. Winje, dated at Christiania, December 3, 1849, and beginning thus : —

“Norse Ole ! My naïve address will almost shock you ; I could find no characteristic epithet for you, and, so far as I know, the peasants call you only Ole Bull — as if titles did not become this name. Therefore, Norse Ole ! . . . May all go well ! May the annoyances which necessarily attend your undertaking be as few as possible !

The selection of plays was restricted, since they were necessarily adapted to the limited powers of the actors. Ole Bull conducted the orchestra and played, as did also his friend, Möllar-gutten, or Thorgeir Andunson of Haukelid-Rock. Mr. Goldschmidt thus speaks of this peasant-violinist, celebrated all over Norway:<sup>1</sup>—

He used to play at dancing parties, and in him many of the old legends, pointing to the demoniac power of music, were revived. In order to understand this, one must have seen the national dances of Norway—the Halling-dance especially. It commences with a slow, majestic measure, and it is surprising to see with what dignity and grace the powerful forms of old and young move; by degrees it becomes quicker, the elder folk retire, and at last it turns into a leaping dance, which only the strongest young people can safely perform, and during which formidable leaps are executed by the lads.

“ Oh, never talk again to me  
Of Spanish girls and Southern dancers,”

you would say, paraphrasing Byron, if you saw this passionate, frantic, though serious and chaste dance, that exhibits the fierce, martial spirit of Norwegian youth. It once happened that, whilst the dance whirled to the wild, fiery music—to the strain proceeding, as it were, from the depths of earth, from the foaming water-

<sup>1</sup> Kristofer Janson has given a graphic and charming picture of Möllar-gutten in his “ Spell-Bound Fiddler,” translated by Auber Forestier.



fall, from the howling tempest of the mountains — the knives of the lads “became loose in their sheaths,” and blood flowed along the floor. The cellar-man, on proceeding to the cellar to bring up beer, saw seated behind a hogshead Old Nick himself playing the fiddle; then, understanding why blood flowed so freely above, he came up and cried out: “Stop your ears, the devil plays the fiddle!” Well, it was said that Thorgeir Andunson could play in like manner, having on his lonely rock of Haukelid learnt it from the spirit reigning in the foaming river below, although his appearance was quiet and gentle and frequently sad. He had married a girl of the same station of life as himself, but always looked up to her as to a peculiar being that had descended to him. Being once asked what was his ambition in life, he answered: “To be able to buy a pair of shoes and a silk neckerchief for my wife.” Having heard of Ole Bull, he came to pay him a visit, and was quite bewildered when he heard one of Mozart’s compositions. “Well,” he said, “this is music!” and strolling about the garden all night, tried to play it from memory; but in his hands it turned into mere Halling-dance. His fine sense showed him in Ole Bull the happier artist, and far from envying, he attached himself to him with a kind of devotion that proved itself afterwards when the violinist established at Bergen the first Norwegian theatre. When the messenger came to Thorgeir, bidding him to gird his loins, and come down to play before a public, the shy artist overcame his bashfulness, and followed the messenger at once, “for I must do something to see and hear Ole.” The

farmers along the mountain road, meanwhile, having heard the tidings that Thorgeir was going to Ole to establish an independent Norse theatre, gave him a mounted escort as a prince. One great farmer, a descendant of the old kings, wished to retain Thorgeir for a night to give a *soirée*, as we should say, and on Thorgeir declining and escaping from his house, — “for Ole expects me at the Norse theatre,” — it nearly came to a battle between the squads, which was prevented by Thorgeir’s solemn promise that he would return and play to the dancers “three entire nights.” He returned home a wealthy man. Ole Bull had made him earn 2000 specie dollars (about £400), — an immense fortune for the fiddler on Haukelid-Rock.

Let me be permitted, before I leave Thorgeir Andunson, to add a few words about the popular music of Norway, which, the dance music included, is most intimately connected with the old ballads, often instead of instrumental music accompanying the dance, and of a peculiarly sweet, romantic character. There are myriads of these ballads, but I will select only a few. A girl meets the elf-king, who sings so enchantingly to her that she follows him to the mountain, which opens itself and closes again when they have entered. The girl’s father, hearing in the forest his daughter’s plaintive call for help, hastens to the spot. If the church bell be rung by the mountain until sunset, the elf-folks must give up their prey; so the bell is taken down from the steeple, and, with the assistance of all the village, brought to the mountain and set in motion. Already is the sun near setting, when the rope breaks,

and the girl has disappeared forever. Now, at the risk of being taxed with exaggeration, I assert that through this music is heard, or felt, the demoniac power of the elf-folks ; at the same time there is a wail for the loss of the girl, as if all the tender, sweet attraction of love between man and woman, all the delicacy, yearning, and devotion which man can feel, were challenged by the outrage committed on the girl.

An old Odelsbonde, renowned for his strength, would only marry his daughter to a lad who could overcome him in wrestling ; a handsome youth, whose daring and love are stronger than his awe of the mighty Odelsbonde, comes to woo and wrestle. With incomparable, simple, patriarchal grace the Odelsbonde arises from his *Höisæde* (chair of honor), and, waving his hand, bids the wooer welcome ; after which, descending the steps into the middle of the hall, he calmly begins the wrestling match. By degrees the combat becomes animated, and the wrestlers hot and passionate, each adversary forgetting in the struggle the object of it—the trembling girl ; at last the old giant, lifting the youth up above his head, flings him down at his feet, a corpse. The music, which has marvelously expressed the incidents of the story throughout, here stops short with a wail of terror and compassion ; and I assure you at the last note your brow will be moist, and if not ashamed of your weakness you will admit that you tremble with emotion. [I allude not to the old song only, but to Ole Bull's composition.]

Lastly, I will give only a short legend. A lad, a violin player, unable to conquer the instrument and elicit



from it what he had on his heart, held its apertures to the mouth of his dying mother, and from that time people, when he played, stood spell-bound, listening with heart and soul to tones not of this world. When Ole Bull went forth to the world, his mother, old Norway, had breathed into his violin, but not her last breath; the spell that bound his listeners had in it something healthy and cheerful joined with its magic power.

From the outside districts Ole Bull brought peasants to perform the national dances in his theatre. Thus the first winter passed, and the summer was spent in preparing with all possible energy for the next season; the actors and musicians worked *con amore*, and success rewarded them; the theatre could now stand on its own merits. After the enterprise had progressed so far, Ole Bull asked of the Storting, in 1851, a yearly appropriation to ensure its perpetuity. His aim was not alone to secure a certain sum for the establishment of a permanent dramatic school, but he desired a public acknowledgment of the National Theatre itself. His petition was refused by a small majority. This grieved him, and, together with other troubles growing out of the management, made him, to a degree, lose heart and courage.

But now the Norse students determined to do all in their power to give him the desired public

approval; with the aid of citizens, representing all classes of society and interests, they arranged a great musical festival in Christiania for the benefit of the Bergen Theatre. This gave Ole Bull a new impulse. He composed a chorus for male voices, which was sung after the prologue, and played several numbers on that occasion with brilliant success. Later in the evening a "Sexa" was given in his honor, and those present were touched to see the happiness he felt in the acknowledgment and acceptance of his pet idea in the Norwegian capital. On his return to Bergen a dramatic performance was given at his suggestion for the University Building Fund in Christiania, in recognition of the sympathy the students had so substantially shown the theatre.<sup>1</sup>

Winter Hjelm, who has supplied many of these details, continues: —

It was not alone the Norse Theatre to which Ole Bull gave thousands of dollars, but every public enterprise of importance was aided liberally by him. He assisted Tidemand and Gude at this time in a series of entertainments given for the benefit of young artists kept at home by the troubles abroad.

The theatre was too great an undertaking for

<sup>1</sup> Ole Bull was made an honorary member of the Students' Union in 1848, and composed for a fête given him at the time his "Saeterbesög," which he dedicated to the Norse Students.

one man to carry. Ole Bull not only lost much money, but he became involved in controversies and lawsuits with the authorities. It will be readily understood that the Norse national feeling he worked for and inspired was unpopular with those who represented the established order of things, and that every possible advantage was seized upon to annoy and harass him. He, as usual, left points open to his adversaries.

On the opening of the theatre the police officials thought that not only they themselves but their assistants (a term which they would have interpreted broadly enough to include their families) should have had tickets presented to them; and they threatened to take measures for closing the theatre if their claims were not conceded. Ole Bull then asked and received their demands in writing. They claimed three permanent, reserved seats for the master, adjutant, and attorney of the police, and more when desired for their assistants; the seats to have a view of stage and audience, and to be chosen before the sale was open to the public. This stupid demand the violinist met with ridicule. He reserved the seats asked for, but hung above them a placard with the inscription in large black letters, "Seats for the Police," and over this a large green lantern to light the placard. For this offense the officials



called him to answer in court; and the case being decided against him he carried it up to the Supreme Court. The distinguished advocate to the crown, Mr. Duncker, an intimate friend of Ole Bull, asked the privilege of acting as his counsel. The appeal was argued in Christiania. Mr. Duncker took the ground that the granting of the seats was a courtesy and not a legal obligation. He indulged in much sarcasm and ridicule at the expense of the complaining officials, and concluded thus: "Who does not feel that in Ole Bull's person art and genius have been offered a grievous insult for which the police of Bergen will never be able to atone? But the satisfaction which the court can give will, I am confident, be granted to Ole Bull." The case was decided in his favor, but not a newspaper in the kingdom dared report the defeat of a government official; and the able defense of Mr. Duncker was printed in Copenhagen by the *North and South*, which said: "We gladly offer our columns to print Mr. Duncker's defense for circulation in Norway, that such a man as Ole Bull may receive the satisfaction due him."

The police officials were naturally irritated at the result of this suit, and watched for opportunities of annoying him. On one occasion he was called upon, under an obsolete municipal regula-

tion, to answer the charge of smoking a cigar in the street in Bergen, as the law allowed only covered pipes to be smoked on the streets. The judge and officers of the court being most of them old friends or former school comrades, the trial was very amusing. The violinist entered the court room, and having in the most courteous and natural manner offered the judge and officers each a cigar, which of course each declined, he lighted his own, remarking that he had not had time at so early an hour to enjoy his regular morning smoke. He was soon acquitted, as it was found that the indictment against him was for smoking "in the square," whereas the regulation forbade it only on the *streets*.

On another occasion, when he was called to answer a charge of the same trivial character, he happened to be summoned to appear in court on the morning of his birthday, the 5th of February, an occasion for visits of congratulation in Norway. A great crowd of his friends, not finding him at home and learning where he was, assembled outside the court-house. Among the number were many peasants who had come in from the country to express their good wishes. During the forenoon the thousands in the streets became so clamorous for his appearance, to tell them what treatment he was receiving, that the

officials were much disturbed. Although requested by the judge to speak to the crowd, the artist declined to do so; but at last the excitement became so intense that at the urgent entreaty of this official he took his arm and walked home to dinner with him, to satisfy and quiet the people.

The children even were interested in these contests, and would accompany Ole Bull to and from the theatre by hundreds, while they took every occasion to torment his annoyers. The affection always shown him by the children of Bergen touched him more than any demonstration on the part of their elders.

Jonas Lie, referring to the establishment of the theatre, says : —

The culture of the country which had fostered his Norse violin was not yet sufficiently advanced for the new step. After two years the theatre passed into other hands, but the 2d of January, 1850, will always be regarded as the birthday of the Norse National Drama and a memorable day in Ole Bull's life. Johannes Brun, Mrs. Gundersen, Mrs. Brun, Mrs. Wolf, and Mrs. Juel, — these artists who have since shed so much lustre on our National Theatre at the capital, — all began their artistic careers in Ole Bull's theatre.

In the disappointments and heartaches which the artist suffered from the misunderstanding of



his best motives and most unselfish efforts, should not be forgotten the sympathy and helpfulness of the men and women of whom Norway is proud to-day. A few letters of this time have been preserved.

The following must have given him new courage and stimulus:—

BALESTRAND,<sup>1</sup> *September 4, 1849.*

. . . As I am not certain to meet you in Christiania when I go there, I write a few words to tell you what a lively interest I feel in your grand undertaking, the laying of the corner-stone of a *Norse* theatre. And next, I have a strong desire to thank you for the happy hours you made me pass when we were last together. It would not do for everybody to express their gratitude by letter, but my artistic conceit makes me feel that the good I gained from your playing was of another kind than that which most people received; but, be that as it may, I have often thought that I must write and thank you some time, and this present occasion is a good one, since this is to be a sort of business letter. I have studied to find if there was not some way I could give my mite to this important work. In any case my suggestion can do no harm if it should not be practicable. I am thinking naturally of painting—the decorations. The manner in which this should be done is no unimportant matter, and especially important is it that it should be done by a Norseman and be Norse in spirit. As I am pretty certain not to be depriving any

<sup>1</sup> A most beautiful spot, the scene of “Frithiof’s Saga.”

fellow-countrymen of work, I offer my services. The theatre must pay for the canvas and colors, or we might procure them in some other way that may occur to us later. You will best know how the directors would receive my offer. This much is certain, that it would give me great pleasure to work for the young theatre in this way. I could have the help of some of the younger artists in Christiania, as it would be too hard a task for me alone. It will be delightful if we can talk this over a fortnight hence in Christiania. The work you have before you will demand courage and endurance, and I wish you enough of both, since of necessity many serious obstacles will surely come in your way. Therefore good courage!—as the song says. I am living amid all this glory and beauty, and know not whether to be sad or happy; for it is in every way delightful, but—what will come of it? The summer joy will soon be past, as already I must light my fire of an evening as I sit and muse in the chimney corner; but this is not so bad either. I leave for Christiania in a week and shall arrive a fortnight hence, when I hope to meet you.

Your very devoted

HANS GUDE.

The following congratulatory letter from the poet Wergeland is characteristic:—

THE GROTTA, 22d July.

DEAR OLE, — Welcome *Home!* I am cursing Denmark, in which you will sympathize with me. You see that I date this from a spot unknown to you. It is my new country-place, and I look forward to having you of

an evening on my balcony, which commands the most glorious view the environs of Christiania can offer. I want, too, to ask you if I should give you the text of what I am now writing. I have two delightful subjects, but both exotic ; the one is Persian, the other filled with raven-black negroes from the Congo coast and copper-colored Portuguese. Or do you wish something Norse ? The latter might be preferable, though the Oriental subjects are exceedingly charming. I dare suggest these, since they are not my own. Let me know your decision. . . . I have a Norse vaudeville lying by me, which I can send you, if you will set it to music. . . .

Having arranged for the business management of the theatre during his absence, Ole Bull visited Hamburg and Copenhagen. He also went to Prussia, giving concerts in several cities. At the end of the year he left Bergen for America, sailing from Liverpool for New York in January, 1852.

Early in March he went to Baltimore to see his counsel, who had written him of the favorable termination of his suit with Schubert. He also visited Lexington, Kentucky, among other places ; and the following note from Henry Clay must have been written at that time, though it bears no date : —

LEXINGTON.

MY DEAR SIR, — I am truly sorry that my bad cold, which the change of weather and the prospect of rain induce me to apprehend I might increase by going out



at night, deprives me of an opportunity of witnessing your performance from which I anticipated so much pleasure to-night. All the other members of my family, who are not indisposed, have gone to enjoy that satisfaction.

I made an unsuccessful effort to see you to-day, but left no card. I hope to pay my respects to-morrow, if you do not leave the city before the afternoon.

I am, respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. CLAY.

MR. OLE BULL, Lexington.

Ole Bull the next morning went to Mr. Clay's house, taking with him his violin. He went into the room adjoining the one in which Mr. Clay was seated, and played in a low tone the great statesman's favorite melody. "The Last Rose of Summer." Mr. Clay's interest was immediately aroused, and he asked if some one was not playing in the street. As the air continued, he remarked, "Ah, that must be Ole Bull; no one but he could play the old familiar air in that manner." When the artist finished, the doors were thrown open, and they embraced.

The following correspondence is interesting from the association of distinguished names:—

SENATE CHAMBER, WASHINGTON, *March 15, 1852.*

OLE BULL, ESQ. :

Sir, — Understanding that your present visit to this country is not made with any professional purpose, we

take occasion to state that it would give us sincere gratification to be afforded an opportunity to witness a display of your peculiar powers in that art in which, by acknowledgment of the world, you are allowed to be a master. We wish to express the hope that you may find it convenient to give a public concert, during the course of your stay in Washington, in such manner and at such time and place as you may choose to indicate.

Very respectfully, your obedient servants,

James Shields,  
R. M. T. Hunter,  
Chas. T. James,  
Hamilton Fish,  
Geo. W. Jones,  
S. P. Chase,  
John J. McRae,  
Richard Brodhead,  
Pierre Soule,  
J. W. Bradbury,  
H. Clay,  
A. P. Butler,  
Wm. M. Gwin,  
S. R. Mallory,  
Chas. Sumner,  
J. D. Bright,

J. M. Mason,  
S. U. Downs,  
Thomas G. Pratt,  
H. Hamlin,  
Thomas J. Rusk,  
M. Norris,  
James C. Jones,  
Jackson Morton,  
W. P. Mangum,  
Lewis Cass,  
John Davis,  
S. A. Douglas,  
Truman Smith,  
John H. Clarke,  
Wm. H. Seward.

The undersigned unite cordially in the foregoing request, and hope that it may be convenient and agreeable to gratify us :

Daniel Webster,  
J. J. Crittenden,  
A. H. H. Stuart,

Wm. A. Graham,  
Thomas Corwin,  
Winfield Scott,

A. De Bodisco,	Marcoleta,
Sartiges,	F. Molina,
John T. Crampton,	De Bosch Spencer,
F. Testa,	G. Sibbern,
A. Calderon de la Barca,	De Sodre.
Fr. V. Gerolt,	

In accordance with this invitation, Ole Bull gave a concert in Washington on the 26th of March. He had visited the city to learn more about the inducements and advantages offered emigrants to go to the Western States. He had now a better opportunity than ever of studying and understanding the government of this country, because of personal acquaintance with such men as Webster, Clay, and Sumner. Minister Sibbern, the resident Swedish ambassador at that time, was a friend of Ole Bull, and did everything in his power to make his stay pleasant.

He now performed by invitation in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. The following notice of one of his concerts at this time (in the New York *Tribune* of May 24, 1852) is from the pen of Mr. George William Curtis:—

Nine years ago Ole Bull, then little known in America, made his début at the old Park Theatre. Those who remember the glowing enthusiasm of that evening, and the triumphal career of which it was the prelude, will understand the interest with which the news of his recent arrival among us was received, and the eager cu-



riosity to know if he was again to witch our world. On Saturday evening that curiosity was satisfied by the re-appearance of the great violinist, and the revelation of undiminished power. The audience was in itself a triumph, on Saturday evening, in the midst of the present musical excitement attendant upon Madame Goldschmidt's farewell series. To gather three thousand people in Metropolitan Hall was an evidence of cordial and admiring remembrance, and of genuine homage to genius of which any artist might be justly proud. Since Ole Bull played here before, our musical experience is enlarged and deepened. Our audience is no longer unused to fine performance. It has heard much of the best, and its approbation is more discriminating, and therefore more flattering. That Ole Bull's success on Saturday evening was very great, it is unnecessary to say ; for no audience (except the French), however critical and severe, can escape the electrical touch of his genius. One word, one glance, one sweep, if it is informed with magnetic power, leaves all rules in the rear, and asserts its own supremacy. Here is the characteristic and charm of Ole Bull. Like Paganini, he is an exceptional person. Like every man of remarkable and pronounced genius, he is a phenomenon. He is his own standard ; he makes his own rules. It is useless to pursue him with the traditional rules. His orbit will not be prescribed or prophesied, for it is eccentric. In all that he does, the traditional temperament of genius betrays itself. He is tremulous and tender, but also rugged and stern, and strong as his native mountains. He is no unapt type of his Norway, with its sunny but

breezy heights, with its dark and solemn depths, and, over all, the clear, blue heaven. In his mien and manner, in his music and his playing, the same thing is constantly felt. They are all wonderfully suggestive, but mainly of bold and melancholy outlines. For the pathos which inheres in all Northern story and character permeates all that he does, not as lachrymose sentiment, but as a genuine minor tone of feeling. It will not be difficult to infer the impression of his music and of his performance. It is all subjugated to himself. It is all means of expression for his own individuality. He aims not so much at a pure representation of the subject treated by his music, as at his own peculiarity of perception in regarding it. The hearer must know it as it struck him, and in the way he chooses, and all tends to impress upon that hearer the individuality of the artist. Hence Ole Bull stands in direct opposition to the "classical" school, of which the peculiarity is to subdue the artist to the music. He is essentially romantic. His performance, beyond any we have ever heard, is picturesque. He uses music as color, and it matters nothing to him if the treatment be more or less elaborate, or rhythmical, or detailed, if it succeed in striking the hearer with the vivid impression sought. It is unavoidable, therefore, that he is called a charlatan. It is natural that the classical artists are amazed at this bold buccaneer roving the great sea of musical approbation and capturing the costliest prizes of applause. But these prizes are never permanently held by weakness. They surrender only to majestic power. Hence we have the strange spectacle of an immense

and miscellaneous audience hanging enchanted upon this wondrous bow, through performances of a length which, in itself, would be enough to wreck most success. Like the voice of an orator speaking for a people its hopes, its indignation, its pity and sorrow, so this violin sings for those who listen their own shifting, wild, and vague fancies. It is because the artist magnetizes them, for the time, and they think and dream as he chooses.

Ole Bull's mastery of his violin is imperial. The proud majesty of his person imparts itself in feeling to his command of the instrument ; and artist, orchestra, and performance only magnify the man. We can, of course, have no quarrel with those who do not like it. If the hearer regrets the want of subtle musical elaboration in the composition ; if he complains of its ponderous *physique* ; if he is angry at the submission of the author to the virtuoso, we have nothing to say but that certainly he has reason, and that, if without these there were no beauty, no grandeur, no long-haunting imagery in the mind, then there would be little hope for our artist. But every man like Ole Bull shows that these are not essentials ; he shows that the heart and imagination yield against all wishes and precedents and rules. Ole Bull is precisely "an irrefragable fact," against which criticism may dash its head at leisure. The public heart will follow him and applaud, because he plays upon its strings as deftly as upon those of his violin. Possessed of a nature whose moods sympathize with those of the mass of men, and that in broad and striking reaches, — not too finely spun, —



not of a Chopin-like dreaminess, which is rather the preternatural state of a feeble and excited organization, but of a broad humanity in his lights and shades, so full of life and overflowing vigor that he must impart that sympathy, and will scorn all rules in burning and branding it upon his audience; it is no marvel that this eccentric artist sways his hearer as he will, and is as secure of victory as Napoleon. If we turn more directly to his performance, we find a purity, a firmness, a sweetness, and breadth of tone which is unprecedented. The violin has no secrets from him. It waits upon him as Ariel upon Prospero. There is no fiddle left in it. It sings and shouts and weeps as he wills. It is an orchestra or a flute or an *Æolian* harp, as the mood seizes him. The brilliancy, the incredible articulation, and the rapidity of his execution — upon one string or four strings — with all kinds of marvelous effects and whims, with the intensity and precision of his bowing, are in harmony with all the rest. They are called tricks, but they are only such tricks as the wind and clouds play; they are only such tricks as an artist of his organization, who loves the sounds and capacities of his instrument for their own sake, must necessarily display. He rejoices in this bewitching of the strings with a kind of physical delight, and he uses that witchery so well, with such richness and lavishness, that the susceptible listener does not long resist. We have left ourselves no space to follow the performance in detail, which we shall do upon occasion of the next concert, at which, in the “Carnival of Venice,” his supreme mastery of the violin will be dazzlingly displayed.

Again Mr. Curtis said:—

Ole Bull was the Ole Bull of old. His andante and adagio movements revealed in a remarkable degree that singular subtlety of his playing by which the instrument and the means seem lost, and only pure sound remains. Certain of his strokes are like rays of light. They seem to flash and glisten sound, rather than produce it by mechanical means. The wild melancholy infused through all these pieces and which imparts to them rather the character of audible reveries than of formal compositions, is one of the great fascinations of his performance. It is always the individuality, always Norway and its weird interpreter, which affects you. The tenderness, the yearning plaintiveness, the subdued sweetness of the "Mother's Prayer," in particular, did not fail of a profound impression on the audience.

Before starting for the West and South, Ole Bull concluded the purchase of a large tract of land for a settlement of Norwegians. This land, 125,000 acres, was on the Susquehanna, in Potter County, Pennsylvania. On the inauguration of the colony, he said: "We are to found a New Norway, consecrated to liberty, baptized with independence, and protected by the Union's mighty flag."

The representations of his countrymen who had settled in the South and had told him their tales of privations and hardships, to which poor

health was added because of the unfavorable climate, had induced him to make the experiment of a settlement in the North. Some three hundred houses were built, with a country inn, a store, and a church, erected by the founder, and hundreds flocked to the new colony. He entered heart and soul into the new project of making his countrymen happy and prosperous. He also continued his concerts for means to carry out his plans, having risked most of his fortune in the original purchase.

The company of artists with whom Ole Bull made his Western and Southern tour was a fine one, including the little Adelina Patti, her sister, Amalia Patti Strakosch, and Mr. Maurice Strakosch. They gave many concerts, some two hundred, we believe, in all.

The following, from a Southern paper, is interesting for its recognition of the early promise of the youngest member of the company: —

We are to hear Signorina Adelina Patti, a musical prodigy only eight years old. Unless the musical critics of the Union are much mistaken, this child is an extraordinary phenomenon. She sings the great songs of Malibran, Jenny Lind, Madame Sontag, and Catharine Hayes with singular power. Her voice is a pure soprano, and such are its remarkable powers that it is not necessary to make any allowance for the perform-



ance being that of a child. . . . It is a mark of great musical intrepidity in a child eight years of age to sing "Ah, mon giunge," from "Sonnambula," and Jenny Lind's "Echo Song"; and nothing short of the testimony we have seen could make us believe such a thing possible. Yet, the whole artistic life of Ole Bull is a guarantee that nothing but sterling merit can take part in his concerts. We have no doubt that Signorina Patti will nestle herself in many a memory to-night, in company with Jenny Lind and Catharine Hayes, not because she is such a singer as they are, but because her youth will impart to her performance a charm that their matured powers cannot give.

From Georgia the violinist wrote his brother Edward, February 6, 1853, as follows:—

Not indifference, but overwhelming business has prevented my answering your dear letter, — and unfortunately my reply must be as short as possible, although I have so much on my heart that I long to tell you. Of my activity as artist and leader, and controller of my little State in Pennsylvania, you can have a conception only when you know that I am engaged simultaneously in laying out five villages, and am contracting with the Government for the casting of cannon, some ten thousand in all, for the fortresses, especially for those in California. Philadelphia has subscribed two millions to the Sunbury and Erie road, which goes near the colony on the south; New York has also given two millions to a branch of the Erie and New York road from Elmira to Oleana, the northern line of the colony, so

that we shall be only twelve hours distant from New York, ten from Philadelphia, and about eleven from Baltimore.

So many have applied for land that I have been obliged to look out for more in the neighborhood; I have bought 20,000 acres to the west, and in the adjoining county (MacKean) I have the refusal of 112,000 acres. In Wyoming County I am contracting for an old, deserted foundry with forest, water-power, workshops, and dwellings, and am taking out patents in Washington for a new smelting furnace for cannon.

I am giving concerts every day, and must often go without my dinner, I am so driven. To-day, Sunday, I have a moment free; to-morrow to Columbia, and on to New Orleans; from there either to Washington, for the inauguration of President Pierce, or to California via Nicaragua; and in the latter event I return to New York to visit the colony the end of April. . . .

This letter indicates sufficiently his plans for the colony, to carry out which successfully would require the attention and judgment of an energetic man of business.

About this time he visited California, and in crossing the Isthmus of Panama his violin case was given a native to carry, the party riding on donkeys. They soon lost sight of the man, and on arriving at Panama it was impossible to find either him or the case. The rest of the company, with Mr. Strakosch, were obliged to take the

steamer, and leave Ole Bull to hunt for his instrument ; but this was not his worst misfortune. While waiting for the next steamer he fell a victim to the yellow fever, and, a riot or disturbance breaking out in the place, he was wholly neglected. One night, during the worst of his illness, he was alone, and was obliged to creep off the bed upon the floor to escape the stray bullets which crashed through the windows from the affray outside. When able to get out again, he was miserably weak, but he left for San Francisco. The advertised dates for his concerts were all passed, and the time was unfavorable, because of the lateness of the season, but he played when his skin was so tender that it would break and bleed as he pressed the strings with his fingers. He had many amusing incidents to tell of the people and life in the far West. He kept no journal, and many of his letters written at this time were afterwards destroyed by fire.

He was now, in his broken state of health, to make a crushing discovery. He found that the title to the land in Pennsylvania, bought and paid for by him in full, was fraudulent, and that even the improvements he had made were a trespass on another man's property. The forests were cleared, and 800 settlers had already made their homes there. Mr. Stewardson, a Quaker,



and the rightful owner of the land, had for a long time tried to reach Ole Bull by messenger and letter; but his efforts had all been futile, so carefully had Ole Bull's business agent watched the mail, always sent to his care, and guarded him from approach. When at last the artist, on his return to Pennsylvania, was legally notified that he was trespassing, he was dumb-founded. He mounted his fine saddle-horse, and, without rest, rode to Philadelphia to see his lawyer and agent who had made the conveyance, hoping that this man's good standing in his profession, the church, and society, was a guarantee for fair and honest dealing. The latter tried to quiet his client by telling him that his papers were good, and insisted that he should eat something before they talked more about the matter. Seated at the table, Ole Bull felt a sudden aversion to the food, although faint from his long fast and ride, and he refused to eat or to drink even a cup of tea. At last the man, when faced by the desperately excited artist, who insisted upon his going with him to the claimant, Mr. Stewardson, if the papers were right, suddenly changed his bearing, and taunted Ole Bull with his inability to do anything to help himself, saying: "I have your money; now, do your worst!" The sister of this man met Ole Bull some years later, and told him that on her broth-

er's death bed he confessed to her that he had poisoned the food and cup of tea that he tried to persuade his client to take, and to which he had felt so strange an aversion.

Mr. Stewardson was interested in Ole Bull's efforts to found his colony, and offered to make a sale of the land at a very low price ; but the artist was able only to buy enough land to protect the people already settled there, and secure the improvements. He brought a suit against the swindlers, who now became his malignant and relentless persecutors. They tried to cripple him in every way ; to prevent his concerts by arrests, and, having acted as his counsel, they were in possession of his papers and valuables, which they claimed for services rendered him, and attached his violin again and again for debt. While on a trip in the Western States, he was exposed to malarial influences along the Mississippi, and the illness which followed proved the most serious physical ailment he had ever suffered. He was finally prostrated by chills and fever, was abandoned by his manager, and later taken to a farm-house on a prairie in Illinois, the hotel-keeper fearing to keep him, lest the disease should prove to be small-pox. He was so ill that he was delirious. As soon as he partially recovered his strength, he resumed his concerts, but the proceeds of these were swal-

lowed up by the expense of his suit in Pennsylvania, and by the security he was often forced to give to release his violin from the attachments put upon it by his persecutors.

With untiring energy, though his health was much broken by fever and over-work, he persevered with his lawsuits, and succeeded at last in wresting some thousands of dollars from the man who had swindled him. Five hard, struggling years were spent in this way. The help and succor he received, as often before, seemed Providential. The best legal talent came to his aid unsought, and in one instance, at least, by a strange impulse. Reading his newspaper at the breakfast table one morning, Mr. E. W. Stoughton said to his wife: "I see that Ole Bull is in trouble, and believe I'll go into court this morning and find out about the case." He had never met the violinist personally, but he went, and just at the right moment to save some valuables and jewels, which would otherwise have been lost. A life-long friendship commenced that day, and Ole Bull often spent weeks together with the Stoughtons. In their house he met in the most delightful way the eminent men of the Bench and Bar. Mr. Stoughton's great and generous service to him, Ole Bull was ever delighted to mention.

The following letters written at this time will



illustrate the annoyances to which the artist was exposed : —

I HANOVER ST., NEW YORK. *Saturday Afternoon.*

OLE BULL, ESQ. :

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Stoughton and myself fear that you may be troubled by H. to-night.

If anything occurs, please inform the bearer, Mr. —, of the nature of the occurrence, and let the officer, if you are arrested, explain to him the grounds of the arrest, and give him any papers which the officer may serve on you ; and also tell him where Mr. Stoughton and myself can come and see you to-night.

Very respectfully yours, C. A. SEWARD.

The following was addressed to an eminent lawyer : —

NEW YORK, *April 16, 1857.*

DEAR SIR, — Mr. Ole Bull, for whose welfare I feel a deep interest, leaves this morning for New Haven, where he intends to give a concert this evening. A judgment has been obtained against him by a Mr. H. of this city. Upon this judgment he was arrested on Saturday and discharged. I fear an attempt may be made to arrest him again upon the same claim in your city, and that he may be imprisoned amongst strangers. This apprehension is based upon the idea that there is a disposition to persecute him. He has lately been very ill and is not yet recovered, and I wish to preserve him from any unpleasant excitement.

The purpose of this, therefore, is to request that, should Mr. H. institute proceedings against Mr. Bull

of the character I have suggested, you will procure for him the necessary bail and act as his counsel ; and I will guarantee you and the bail you may procure against all liability, and will pay all counsel fees, and, should the bail prefer it, I will on your requirement immediately deposit in your hands an amount equal to their liability.

By doing this you will aid a most estimable and much injured and unfortunate man, and will confer a great favor upon

Yours truly,

E. W. STOUGHTON.

All of Ole Bull's correspondence shows that his friends knew how apt he was to neglect his own affairs, and that they were watchful of his interests and sympathized with him in his reverses. To such a nature as his this was everything; it gave him courage — it saved him.

When worn out and ill, both from anxiety and from physical weakness, he received one day a note from Mrs. Child. She told him that she had heard of his troubles and his need of rest, and wanted him to come to her country home at once. He followed her directions implicitly like a child, taking the train she had named without even going first to his hotel. Arrived at the station he found her and her husband waiting to drive him to their home. The peace and quiet of the country, and the presence of these kind friends, were like heaven to him. Noticing

probably how tired he was, they took him to his room, a chamber with a view of trees and fields beyond, the windows shaded by muslin curtains, and suggested that he should rest before going down to tea. With one look at the quiet landscape outside he threw himself on the bed. On waking he found Mrs. Child watching by his side, and started up with an apology for having kept her, as he feared, waiting too long. She smiled and told him that it was almost twenty-four hours since he had lain down for a few moments' rest. The anxiety of his friends was relieved when he woke refreshed, and, as he said, his reason saved.

The following letter will also show the help and encouragement his friends gave him at this hard period of his life:—

ANDOVER, Monday, *October 8.*

DEAR FRIEND, — We are all sitting around our centre table; the blaze of the fire flickering on the walls, and enlivening the hearth. We are recalling the pleasant hours spent in Hartford. My husband says to me — Did you indeed see Ole Bull? He has always been one of my ideals — how I wish he would come here! Why, says I, he did promise to come, perhaps: — so you see that you are not forgotten. Do not, my dear friend, despair of human nature — nor wholly despair of America; the experience of the past has shivered so many brilliant illusions. You remember



that hope remains even at the bottom of Pandora's box.

Meanwhile let me send you my husband's assurance with mine that a fireside welcome is ever kept for you at the old stone cabin in Andover. It is not "the elephant," interesting as he is, but the elephant's master, that shall be made welcome — welcome for the music within, whether he choose or not to give it outward expression.

Come speak to us of the lovely fjords and dripping waterfalls and glittering lakes of Norway — and, if you come soon enough, we will take you to see our beautiful lakes in Andover.

But if you cannot come, let our invitation remain by you as a token of a place where you might rest for a while in kind and simple friendly welcome, — where you may at any time, if you choose, come and sleep a day without our troubling you with a word; in short, where you shall find rest and do exactly as you please. Nobody shall ask you to play a tune; nobody shall hinder your playing an opera; you shall come and go at will and be as free as in the wood. Liberty is about all that we keep here and that we offer.

I trust that your affairs in New York are not going ill; but however they go, let me hope that you will be borne above this world. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. When we perish with hunger there is always bread enough to spare in our Father's house.

With kindest feelings and remembrances,

Truly yours,

H. B. STOWE.

James Gordon Bennett had been most kind to Ole Bull from the time of his first visit to the United States. When at that time the friends of Vieuxtemps were assailing him by personal attacks as well as musical criticism, Mr. Bennett called, and offered the columns of the *Herald* for any answer Ole Bull might like to make. With a warm pressure of the hand, he replied in his broken English: "I tink, Mr. Benneett, it is best tey writes against me and I plays against tem." "You're right, Ole Bull, quite right," said the editor with a laugh; "but remember the *Herald* is always open to you." The following characteristic quotation is from one of Mr. Bennett's notes: "I am happy you are again so successful. You, and you only, can raise the devil or the angels."

This brief note from Thalberg may be inserted here:—

NEW YORK, 26th Decembre, 1856.

MON CHER OLE BULL, — Ulmann vous aura dit, que jusqu'à présent il m'a été impossible d'aller vous voir malgré toute l'envie que j'en avais; il me fait travailler comme un nègre, et m'empêche même d'aller voir mes amis. J'ai été désolé de vous savoir malade sans même pouvoir vous offrir mes services. — Lundi prochain, par extraordinaire, j'aurai quelque liberté, et j'en profiterai pour venir causer avec vous et de vous assurer de vive voix de mes sentimens les plus dévoués.

Tout à vous,

S. THALBERG.

A volume of Theodore Parker's sermons, with an affectionate word of presentation, is among the mementos of his Boston visits.

The press of the country, as well as friends, gave him warm expressions of confidence and sympathy. A Philadelphia paper said, among other things, of a two hours' interview with Ole Bull:—

He speaks of his wrongs with the most forbearing disposition, and shrinks from thrusting them before the public and making himself an object of sympathy. He has always firmly refused to do so, believing that justice in his case will ultimately triumph without any adventitious aid from a sympathizing public.

The *Evening Post*, of New York, for March 9, 1857, said:—

The Norwegian made his appearance last evening at Dodsworth Hall, and once more exercised his spell of musical witchery over a crowded audience. His well-known identity with his violin, playing on it as if the strings of his heart were strained over it, seems to be as perfect as ever, while the new story that his heart has to tell—the troubles and reverses he has undergone since he last played among us—seems to be faithfully added to its expression. He played with more intensity of concentration in the passages of force and vivid rapidity, while his lingerings upon the sadder and more pathetic strains were indescribably truthful in their mournfulness. It is the peculiarity of Ole Bull, and perhaps



the secret of his charm over the sympathies of his audience, that all he plays seems so faithfully autobiographic. His expressive face tells the same story as his violin. The listeners to his music last night were evidently completely absorbed in the study of the *man*; and it is a strong warranty for the renewal of his success that he can now exercise, even better than before, his wonderful personal magnetism. His history and present position, we may as well add, fully entitle him to the sympathy for which his violin pleads so expressively.

In 1856, the violinist's eldest son had joined him, and had been most kindly received by his father's friends. Many notes, still preserved, attest the thoughtful attentions given them when ill and confined to their beds, as they both were in New York that season.

When Ole Bull gave his last concerts in Dods-worth Hall, in New York, in 1857, he was so ill that he had to be helped on and off the stage, and occasionally the applause of the audience alone kept him roused to consciousness, so weak was he from the chills and fever. No suffering ever kept him from appearing when announced, if he could possibly do it; and in his long experience he used to say with pride that he had, almost without fail, kept all his engagements with the public. He now decided that he must try what his native air would do for him, and in the autumn he returned to

Bergen. He found that unfavorable reports had preceded him, and where he ought only to have met with sympathy at home, he sometimes found suspicion. It was said that he had speculated ruthlessly at the expense of his countrymen, and that they were the only sufferers by his misfortunes. American institutions and tendencies were not at all popular among a large class in Norway at that day, and Republican liberty, it was said, meant only license. Poor in health and purse, Ole Bull's home-coming was not to be envied. Mother Nature was the same, however, and he soon gained strength and courage from his native mountain air. He resumed his direction of the theatre, having engaged Björnstjerne Björnson as dramatic instructor, which gave the enterprise a strong and fresh impulse. Björnson had recently published "*Synnöve Solbakken*" and "*Arne*," which latter he dedicated to Ole Bull.

A. O. Winje wrote him: —

CHRISTIANIA, 20th February, 1860.

You cannot imagine, dear Ole Bull, how happy I am at your success, and that in this great work you, like the gods, are ever young. . . . Eight days since, when the first good news came in prose and verse (I take the Bergen papers), I had to run down to your brother Randolph, to tell him.

After a mention of the assembling of the

Swedish Parliament and the outlook of the Norse interests in that stirring period, when the question of the governorship of Norway by a Swede or Norwegian was being considered, and telling Ole Bull that it would be a good time for him to make his influence felt in Sweden by a visit there, he concluded:—

Now when all with you is as you wish it, come this way and give vent to your wrath, for it is not well that you should have too much good fortune — not even you. The gods themselves could not bear it; the Roman Triumvirs, remember, had their buffoons in their triumphal cars. Do you go to Russia or England? Wherever you go, God bless you! Greet Björnson.

THY A. O. WINJE.

The following note from Fanny Elssler shows that he must have given a concert in Hamburg, *en route* to the German baths:—

So eben erfahre ich, wo Sie wohnen, beeile mich daher Ihnen herzlich meinen wärmsten Dank zu sagen, für die liebenswürdige Sendung einer Loge in Ihr Concert, in welchem Sie mich durch Ihr herrlich und ergreifendes Spiel wahrhaft entzückt haben, was ich so gern Ihnen mündlich sagen möchte!

Ich bin jeden Tag zwischen 3 und 4 Uhr zu Hause, und darf Ihnen wohl nicht sagen wie sehr sich eine alte Bekannte freuen würde Ihnen freundschaftlich die Hände zu drücken? Sie nennt sich

FANNY ELSSLER.

*Den 21ten April, 1858.*



Ole Bull met Fanny Elssler in Vienna, in 1877. She recalled with interest many of the incidents of her visit to the United States, which she said seemed then like a dream to her. Still handsome, the noble graceful carriage as striking as ever, her face with its winning smile was one to attract a stranger's eye in the crowded audience room of the great Musik Verein Hall.

From Hamburg Ole Bull went to Vienna and Pesth, and his success, as reported by the papers, was extraordinary. He wrote to his son, from Vienna, May 8, 1858: —

Thanks for your dear letter, which I would have answered at once if important changes in my plans had not made it necessary to defer my return to Bergen. I received offers from the directors in Pesth and Gratz, and after the conditions and dates were fixed I was asked to make later dates. I leave for Pesth this evening. Day after to-morrow the first concert, and the fourth on the 17th! Therefore I cannot be in Bergen. I hope, though, to reach there the end of this month.

You know what stress I lay on the observance of this Thanksgiving-festival, and if pecuniary obligations did not compel me otherwise, I would instantly go to you; but *ratio pro voluntate!*

In Berlin I met my old friend Bettina von Arnim, who, sad to say, is fast approaching the end. She was so glad to see me that I delayed my departure two days, to celebrate her birthday with my violin. The next

day Joachim came from Hanover, to make my acquaintance: I of course staid one day more on his account. I see that he is now playing in London. Ernst is very ill in Baden-Baden; he, poor man, is crippled by gout! . . . I have also seen Liszt after an interval of sixteen years: he has taken holy orders. . . .

He writes on the 27th of May from Pesth, which he now revisited after the lapse of nineteen years:—

I leave in an hour for Vienna. I have taken a course of bitter salt waters at Ofen; my blood is benefited. It was necessary, as the fever had come again, and although not so serious as in the United States, still to a degree that caused me much inconvenience. I shall now hurry home.

The enthusiasm has been so great here, that I have been obliged to promise to return at the end of the year. . . .

He did not return directly, however, as it was deemed advisable for him to go to Carlsbad, where he spent the summer. Among the friends he especially enjoyed meeting there were Mr. and Mrs. Henry A. Wise, of Virginia, whom he had known intimately in the United States.

In October he was again in Norway, and on his return to Bergen he bought of his mother the ancestral home, Valestrand. He spent that winter in improving the place; he commenced the

thorough drainage of the land, which work he pushed vigorously for years, and it was not interrupted by the winters, so mild is the climate on that coast. The estate now belongs to his son, Mr. Alexander Bull. The following picturesque description of the place is from an article by H. H. in the *Atlantic Monthly* for June, 1881 :—

Another memorable Bergen day was a day at Valestrand, on the island Osteröen. Valestrand is a farm which has been in the possession of Ole Bull's family for several generations, and is still in the possession of Ole Bull's eldest son. It lies two hours' sail north from Bergen,—two hours, or four, according to the number of lighters loaded with cotton bales, wood, etc., which the steamer picks up to draw. Steamers on Norway fjords are like country gentlemen who go into the city every day and come out at night, always doing unexpected errands for people along the road. No steamer captain going out from Bergen may say how many times he will stop on his journey, or at what hour he will reach its end : all of which is clear profit for the steamboat company, no doubt, but is worrying to travelers ; especially to those who leave Bergen of a morning at seven, as we did, invited to breakfast at Valestrand at nine, and do not see Osteröen's shore till near eleven. People who were not going to Valestrand to breakfast that day were eating breakfast on board, all around us : poor people eating cracknels and dry bread out of baskets ; well-to-do people eating sausage, eggs, and coffee, neatly served at little tables on deck, and all



prepared in a tiny coop below-stairs, hardly big enough for one person to turn around in. It is an enticing sight always for hungry people to see eating going on ; up to a certain point it whets appetite, but beyond that it is both insult and injury.

The harbor of Valestrand is a tiny amphitheatre of shallow water. No big craft can get to the shore. As the steamer comes to a stop opposite it, the old home of Ole Bull is seen on a slope at the head of the harbor, looking brightly out over a bower of foliage to the southern sun. It appears to be close to the water, but, on landing, one discovers that he is still a half hour's walk away from it. A little pathway of mossy stones, past an old boat-house, on whose thatched roof flowering grasses and a young birch-tree were waving, leads up from the water to the one road on the island. Wild pansies, white clover and dandelions, tinkling water among ferns and mosses along the roadsides, made the way beautiful ; low hills rose on either side, softly wooded with firs and birches feathery as plumes ; in the meadows peasant men and women making hay, — the women in red jackets and white blouses, a delight to the eye. Just in front of the house is a small, darkly shaded lake, in which there is a mysterious floating island, which moves up and down at pleasure changing its moorings often.

The house is wooden, and painted of a pale flesh color. The architecture is of the light and fantastic order of which so much is to be seen in Norway, — the instinctive reaction of the Norwegian against the sharp, angular, severe lines of his rock-made, rock-bound coun-

try, — and it is vindicated by the fact that fantastic carvings, which would look trivial and impertinent on houses in countries where Nature herself had done more decorating, seem here pleasing and in place. Before the house were clumps of rose-bushes in blossom, and great circles of blazing yellow eschscholtzias. In honor of our arrival, every room had been decorated with flowers and ferns ; and clumps of wild pansies in bloom had been set along the steps to the porch. Ole Bull's own chamber and music-room are superb rooms, finished in yellow pine, with rows of twisted and carved pillars, and carved cornices and beams and panels, all done by Norwegian workmen.

Valestrand was his home for many years, abandoned only when he found one still more beautiful on the island of Lysöen, sixteen miles southwest of Bergen.

A Norwegian supper of trout freshly caught, and smothered in cream, croquettes, salad, strawberries, goat's-milk cheese, with fine-flavored gooseberry wine, served by a Norwegian maid in a white-winged head-dress, scarlet jacket, and stomacher of gay beads, closed our day. As we walked back to the little moss-grown wharf, we found two peasants taking trout from the brook. Just where it dashed foaming under a little foot-bridge, a stake-lined box trap had been plunged deep in the water. As we were passing, the men lifted it out, dripping, ten superb trout dashing about wildly in it, in terror and pain ; the scarlet spots on their sides shone like garnet crystals in the sun, as the men emptied them on the ground, and killed them, one by one, by knocking their heads against a stone with a sharp,

quick stroke, which could not have been so cruel as it looked.

On our way back to Bergen we passed several little row-boats, creeping slowly along, loaded high with juniper boughs. They looked like little green islands broken loose from their places, and drifting out to sea.

“For somebody’s sorrow!” we said thoughtfully, as we watched them slowly fading from sight in the distance. . . .

In the winter of 1860 Ole Bull went to Stockholm, giving seventeen concerts in that city, and then to Finland.

In 1861–1862 he gave forty-six concerts in England, Scotland, and Ireland. He left the settlement of his accounts with the impresario till the end of the trip, and then giving up the memorandum before the money was handed him, received not one penny of the proceeds, all of which remained in the pockets of the manager.

While he was in Paris, in 1862, the sad intelligence of his wife’s death reached him. She had suffered much the last years of her life from ill-health, and, living in an adopted country, the misfortunes and sorrows of her husband, added to her own, were more than she could bear.

The following letter to his son was written from Hamburg, September 18, 1862:—

Instead of coming myself with the steamer to Ber-



gen, as I had hoped, I am obliged to wait for — my trunk, which went astray between Cologne and this place, and for which I have waited now three whole days. Notwithstanding my troubles, my health was better, and would have kept improving had I not broken a rib in my left side, just as I was about to leave Godesberg, after giving a concert for the benefit of the organ in the Catholic church there, by request of the authorities. The concert was a brilliant affair, but I had to pay for it. It seemed that it had been planned to convert me to Catholicism, and a young Jesuit, who was taking the water-cure, sought, partly by charges against Protestantism, partly by flattery or threats, to make himself interesting ; and when I declined his entertainment he turned about suddenly and claimed to be greatly interested in my views. One morning he came to meet me just as I had returned from a walk in the mountains and was going to breakfast, handing me a newspaper. As I accepted it and bowed, he threw his arms about my neck and pressed his knee against my breast ; I felt and heard a crack in my side, as I pushed him from me. I went to the hotel, but did not feel well, and the doctor found a rib was broken. I had to keep my bed day and night for a week's time, using wet bandages to prevent inflammation. When I got out, I exerted myself too much, so the bone has not knit together as well as could be desired.

I went recently to Aix-la-Chapelle to get my Guarnierius, which I had confided to a Frenchman, Monsieur D., to repair ; but on my arrival I found all the parts were separated ; the side-pieces by themselves, the top

and back also ; the neck divided, and the man himself in despair ! I was obliged to put it together again myself, but what a task ! He helped me. Poor fellow, I was sorry for him. When he saw what wretched work he had made of it, I could neither take the violin from him, and thereby ruin his reputation, nor scold him more. At last it was finished, and now I have three Guarneriuses beside my pearl, the Nicholas Amati, large pattern, that has the most beautiful tone of them all. I exchanged another for it in London last year, and Mr. Plowden, an amateur, offered me a considerable advance ; but I would rather part with all my other violins than this, which is remarkable for its peculiar softness and clearness. Besides, it fits the hand well, and has the greatest variety of tone-color, that is to say, versatility of expression. I have had and am having a hard time. I must try to keep up courage. If I am to go under, I will still fight as long as I can, — perhaps the sun will shine when I least expect it ! . . .

In 1863 he visited Christiania, and hoped to induce the people there to establish an Academy of Music. It was but a continuation of his earlier programme and thought of “a Norse Orchestra in a Norse Theatre.” He explained himself in an article published in the *Illustrated News*:—

#### A NORSE MUSIC ACADEMY.

I saw the new flag hoisted above our nation : that flag which adorns the harbors of the world, and which, at half-mast, has mourned many of the men who, in the

face of opposition, labored to raise it. In this flag, floating above us, and the Constitution under us, the Norse house has its roof and floor. The house can now be seen, and has a name among the nations. But this does not complete it, and it would be a sin to leave it half finished, exposed to wind and weather. There are still many rooms to be furnished, if the house is to be occupied by a nation claiming civilization and culture. Between the Danish and the Norse drama there is now drawn a tolerably definite line ; but round about on the home walls hang the pictures of all nations, brought by wanderers from every corner of the globe — as might be expected in a sailor's home, which ours is. There is so much that is foreign and so little of our own ! Even our home subjects are worked up in foreign lands, by our own homesick artists, it is true, but bearing on them the servile mark of exile, set there by a borrowed, foreign brush. I have spent many a sad hour with these men, — exiled not so much because of our national poverty as of our national lack of culture, — wanderers, to be met with the world over. We have talked of the dream cherished in common by all Norse artists : the coming home and uniting all the forces in schools in which the national art could be developed to an independent manhood, and Norway be given the honor which foreigners now take from her. When these longings become too intense for control, the exiles fly haphazard home — painters, sculptors, and musicians striking against the old, gray, naked cliffs of their country's insensibility. Forgetting old and futile efforts in the new, one now and then manages to gain a slight foot-



hold ; but the rest must abroad again, to repeat the old story. This, the history of our country's attitude towards art is a disgrace to the nation, and a crime against those men who have given their all to art, and are driven to sell our honor abroad.

My calling in this world is the Norse music. I am no painter, no sculptor, no writer. I am a musician, and, being one, I ought to be trusted when I say that I hear a wonderfully deep and characteristic sound-board vibrating in the breasts of my people. The desire of my life has been to give it strings ; that it may find voice, and its deep tones penetrate the temple as Norway's church music bears the words of the minister to the hearts of the congregation ; that on the battle-field it may remind the country's defenders of their hearth-stones ; that it may be heard from our orchestras and from a National art which can rise only from this source ; that it may sound from the pianos round the land, cultivating, ennobling the family-life more than all the languages of the world, in charm and intelligibility unsurpassed ! I have spent my life in striving to climb these gray cliffs with the other Norse artists, by trying to overcome the denationalized musical taste. Now, I propose to my colleagues, the musicians, that we each lend a hand in a united effort to scale the rocks and reach the height ; that we found an Academy for musical instruction. It may be that we shall at last plant the flag on the heights, and be able to reach a helping hand down to others who are toiling upward !

OLE BULL.

To his son he wrote from Christiania, February 27. 1863 : —

To-day I spoke with the King ; he has signed the petition for an Academy, asking for an appropriation of \$1200 a year from the Exchequer. Subscriptions are now being privately arranged. We have the offer of the free use of the dramatic company's rooms, — in accordance with the will of the donor (Collet), who gave them for the benefit and advancement of the dramatic and musical arts, and also to be a preparatory school for the Norse stage.

I have much to do, and meet, as always, a great deal of opposition ; but I do not doubt that it will go. One must strike with all one's force. Poor Thorvald !<sup>1</sup> I try to quiet myself with the thought that I did everything in my power to prevent his going to sea, but he would make his own way for himself. . . .

Jonas Lie says : —

The Academy, as we know, was not founded ; but the seed — the thought — was at that time planted. Since then it has grown and matured, and to-day we have a body of artists and composers, and quite another musical culture ready to receive it.

From 1863 to 1867 Ole Bull gave concerts in Germany, Poland, and Russia. He was honored in Berlin and Copenhagen by special festivities. In Copenhagen, at a banquet given by the "Norse Union," the eminent Danish poet, Carl Ploug, proposed the toast to "the king of the realm of

<sup>1</sup> This son had fallen from the mast of a sailing vessel in the Mediterranean ; he was buried at Malta.

art." He traveled in Russia during the seasons of 1866–1867. He used to say that no professional trip ever gave him more pleasure, and he would not venture to repeat it. He wrote a musical friend in Christiania, from Königsberg, June 4, 1866, as follows: —

It was strange that the notice of my death should have been dated the 10th of April, the very day that a silver music-rest was presented to me by the students of Moscow. I had given a concert for them, on which occasion we had made a great demonstration, because of the attempted assassination. How fortunate that it all turned out so well! The students had asked me to lead them, and I began by calling on the people (the first time it had been done!) to sing the royal hymn. . . .

I have sent two Arabian horses from St. Petersburg: one black, by name Godolfin; the other Caraguese, a golden bronze with black mane and tail. They are of different breed, the black being south-Arabian blood, and the other Persian-Arabian. You will also see a beautiful violoncello<sup>1</sup> which will make your mouth water, as well as a glorious Antonius and Hieronimus Amati; I have also bought a Joseph Guarnerius in Moscow. . . .

From Wiesbaden, July 2, 1865, he wrote his son: —

I am to leave Hamburg by the Saturday steamer for Bergen. This coming Wednesday I am to give a concert in the Theatre, for the benefit of the actors' fund,

<sup>1</sup> The violoncello was given by Ole Bull to this same friend.



and leave Thursday, going direct to Hamburg. I long to see you again, and to pass two months in quiet at Valestrand. I am much benefited by the baths, and it was well that I could give the time, as the same old symptoms of chills and fever had returned. I am now almost well, and hope, with the friendly action of the fine Valestrand air, to be entirely quit of this oppressive burden. I have in hand a work on the violin, which I hope to finish during my summer rest—and to go out again in the autumn with new vigor. I trust you will think that I look better.

I passed some days with the Duke of Nassau, at his palace in Weilburg, and he courteously gave me the Adolf cross; he claims a special value for it, since it was never before given to an artist.

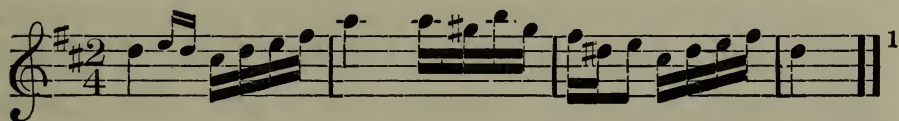
But think, Alexander! I have been so foolish as to buy a delightful Gaspar da Salo,<sup>1</sup> which is now my favorite. It has a much more majestic and noble tone than my other violins, and is adapted for concert purposes.

After invitations and messages to friends and relatives to visit the new house which he had built, but had not yet seen, he continues:—

I sent 2000 willows from Amsterdam. You have planted them by the stream, the best place for them? Have you bridged the brook and filled the slope, and remembered the poor birch-trees, which must have lived only on hope and air? You have papered some of the walls; we can pother and putter about these for a change, can we not? Serious conferences shall be held, and furnish us amusement. . . .

<sup>1</sup> This instrument was used by him in his concerts from that time.

I hope the low land by the lake looks well with its crop of oats. Their movement is so light and billowy as they are swayed by the wind, that they remind me of



and they break the monotony of a space without trees near the water. . . .

I am now going to the musical festival at Coblenz, and am to return this evening. I breakfast with the Prince of Holstein (the highest in command), and am to sup with Mayor Schott in Biebrich. . . .

P. S.—We should make some excursions to the interior of the island this summer, with the fiddle on our back.

This extract from a letter to his son, in Paris, dated at Bergen, September 4, 1866, is interesting for its prescience of political events : —

Take care, Alexander ! political events are following closely on one another ; the French have an enemy in the United States not to be ignored [since the affair in Mexico] ; they must also beware of Germany ; their fleets and finance would soon be ruined by a war. The times have changed, and the turn has come for Prussia to play the master in Europe. She has a solid basis, a sound exchequer ; while in France all is unsettled and can easily fall out of equilibrium. The French are to be banished from Rome, too ; and they must create new surprises and new *gloires* in time, or fail. The great

<sup>1</sup> A Norwegian melody.

man [Napoleon III.] is seriously ill; France knows it, and is silent; but events will speak. Be careful, — never take part in political discussions, I pray you!

Ole Bull was an eager reader of the newspapers, and kept up always with the daily telegraphic news. In the war between Germany and France he was an enthusiastic advocate of the German cause as against the imperialism of Napoleon. A fortnight before the event, he predicted to a friend in Wisconsin the compulsory resignation of McMahon as president of the republic and the election of Grévy, and, with almost faultless accuracy, the members of Grévy's cabinet. He had a personal acquaintance with leading men and workers in every country of Europe, and this, together with his profound sympathy with the thoughts and aspirations of the people as a whole, enabled him to arrive at his own conclusions.

From St. Petersburg he wrote his son, April 17, 1867: —

These lines to tell you in haste that I have determined to visit Paris as soon as possible. To-morrow to Warsaw, where I am to give two concerts, and then direct to Paris. . . .

I have just composed a fantasy on a Russian air, "The Nightingale," — my adieu to Moscow, — and was obliged to repeat it. It has no great musical worth, —



only effective. Perhaps you will like it ; there is a sad thought running through it. I will rewrite it at Valestrand. My "Gaspar da Salo" is full of joy, and bears its virtuoso like an Arab ; it is really matchless since I had a bar of seven-hundred-years'-old wood put in by Weihe ; and I have discovered a new method for measuring and placing the bar in its relation to the building and playing of the violin.

Greet our countrymen in Paris most cordially. . . .

In November, 1867, Ole Bull again visited the United States. He went directly to the West, giving his first concert in Chicago. In the Northwestern States were some 300,000 of his own countrymen, and they received him everywhere with rejoicing. In many towns they met him with torchlight processions and speeches of welcome, and he often left substantial proofs of his sympathy in gifts to their churches and libraries.

One evening in Milwaukee he played Paganini's "Second Concerto" with so much spirit that his audience caught the enthusiasm of the player. On leaving the stage he whispered to his son : " I believe Paganini himself would have been pleased to-night, had he heard me."

A Philadelphia writer, speaking of this visit of Ole Bull, says : —

It is probable that the artist was never in his life so

acceptable to the American people as during his concert tour of 1868-1869. But no kindness of fortune could prevent the constantly recurring incidents and accidents of this extremely interesting life. In the autumn of 1868 Ole Bull was a passenger down the Ohio River, when a collision between two steamboats occasioned a terrible accident, which involved the loss of many lives. "On that evening," as he narrated afterwards, "without having any reason for what I did, I put on my coat and overcoat and went up on deck with my violin-case in hand. It was then past midnight." Soon afterward the shock occurred. One boat had a quantity of petroleum, which, igniting, poured out upon the river and surrounded both vessels with a circle of fire. He was obliged to spring overboard, but reached the shore with violin and person alike intact, and after a tough struggle up the precipitous and clayey bank of the stream found a firm footing at the top. He was obliged to walk till daylight before he found a shelter.

There was enough music, fortunately, in the violin-case for immediate use; and although the company had lost all their luggage, only one concert was given up. The second night after the accident Ole Bull performed in Cincinnati as announced, but was obliged to appear in his traveling dress.

In the summer of 1869 he gave his services to the great Peace Jubilee in Boston, conducted by Mr. P. S. Gilmore, and this so delayed his de-

parture for Europe that he could make only a flying visit to Norway. He returned again in the autumn. The winter following, he gave concerts and traveled constantly. He was everywhere warmly received by the public, both East and West.

In April, 1870, he sailed for Norway. The New York *Tribune* made the following mention of his departure: —

“Herr Ole Bull, from the N. Y. Philharmonic Society,” was the inscription upon a beautiful silken flag presented to the great violinist, yesterday, on the deck of the United States revenue cutter, which conveyed him from the barge-office at the Battery to the steamship *Russia*. The flag was the Norwegian colors, with the Star-Spangled Banner inserted in the upper staff section. The committee of presentation were Messrs. Hill, Schaad, and Doremus, the latter being the spokesman. Ole Bull was accompanied on board the steamer by quite a large number of friends, among whom were Miss Adelaide Phillips, Miss Alide Topp, Mrs. Belknap and sister, Dr. and Mrs. Doremus, General Banks, Senator Conkling, Mr. F. S. Appleton, and others. Dr. Doremus’s presentation speech, happily conceived, was responded to in the warm-hearted and impulsive manner peculiar to the artist, whose impulsiveness has ever characterized the products of his genius, and whose warm-heartedness is known to hundreds who have blessed him for his generosity. Senator Conkling and General Banks also made appropriate speeches. As



the cutter left the steamer, the company waved together their regrets and their farewells; and the form of the fine old gentleman, bare-headed and swinging his hat, was seen as long as forms could be distinguished in the distance.

This beautiful flag was, according to Ole Bull's promise on its acceptance, always carried in the 17th of May processions in Bergen, and floated on the 4th of July.

A beautiful silver vase presented by the N. Y. Philharmonic Society that season, a piece of silver plate given by the Young Men's Christian Association of New York city, for whom he had played, and a very rich and beautiful gold crown given him in San Francisco, were among the mementos which he carried home to Norway.

A still closer tie was soon to bind him to the United States, the country which seemed already his by adoption. In Madison, Wis., in the winter of 1868, Ole Bull first made the acquaintance which resulted in his second marriage. He took a kindly interest in the musical studies of his friend there, and later in New York. To others this delightful relation of teacher, adviser, and friend seemed the only one permissible; but he wrote: "Other than human powers have decided my fate. . . . The sunbeams I shut out, but the sun itself I could not annihilate."

The marriage was delayed in deference to the wishes of others for some months, but without resulting in a modification of their fears concerning the disparity of years and other conditions. It was later decided to have a private marriage. This was consummated in Norway, and publicly announced and confirmed on the return to the United States, three months later, in the autumn of 1870.

During the years 1867-69 Ole Bull had worked on his improvement of the piano-forte. This attempt to build a piano outside a manufactory would have been a very doubtful experiment even if the principle of construction had not been itself an experiment. He would not permit the use of any of the old means for strengthening and sustaining the sounding-board, which necessarily in time destroy its power of giving out a good quality of tone. His principal effort was to sustain the board at the ends, leaving the sides free, not permitting the board to be pierced for the insertion of screws to unite the upper and lower frame-work, as is generally done. The wooden strips employed to strengthen the great surface of the board should, he thought, be made to help the tone as well, on the principle of the bar in the violin; the whole to be so adjusted that the wood might grow better with use and age.

The first instrument was made under very great disadvantages. The workmen had it in hand while Ole Bull was absent on his concert tour. A telegram would announce to him the breaking of the frame, which he would try to remedy by suggestions sent by telegram or letter. This instrument cost some \$15,000. Not satisfied with this, he commenced another, and met the same old difficulties in the frame, or new ones quite as serious. John Ericsson learned of his trouble, had him explain his idea, made a frame of the right weight and strength, only insisting upon one condition, — the acceptance of it by Ole Bull as a present. This second piano proved satisfactorily that the theory was sound and practicable. Ole Bull had hoped to perfect his invention and introduce the instruments to the public. This would have given him the greatest satisfaction; for even the best pianos give only for a short time a musical quality of tone, and necessarily deteriorate from use, not only because of the wear in the action, which can be replaced, but also on account of the destruction and breaking down of the woody cells and tissues of the sounding-board itself, under the improperly distributed strain brought to bear upon it.

The opportunity never came to Ole Bull of doing more than to satisfy himself that his



theory could be realized. Two pianos only were made; but these proved the possibility of doing away with the objectionable features in the present construction of the instrument, which, in time, must destroy the vitality of the sounding-board and its power to produce a pure tone. It is well known that none but new pianos are used by professional players; and an instrument which has been used for any length of time positively vitiates a musical ear.

No friendly service ever touched Ole Bull more deeply than the generous helpfulness of John Ericsson, whom he admired and loved. It is with a sense of grateful recognition that the following letter is now given in concluding this mention of the piano: —

NEW YORK, *December 13, 1880.*

MY DEAR MRS. BULL, — In adverting to the fact, — when I had the pleasure of addressing you last week, — that everything connected with Ole Bull's memory is dear to me, I omitted to refer to his admirable conception of securing the strings of pianos to a separate frame, composed of metal, so formed that it may be applied to any wooden stand more or less ornamented. It was my privilege, often, to listen to my lamented friend's disquisitions relating to the violin, showing his clear mechanical conceptions of the laws which govern the construction of that most perfect of all musical instruments. The great violinist possessed a singularly

accurate knowledge of the necessary relations between the capability of resisting the tension of the strings, and the elasticity requisite to admit of a perfectly free movement of the sounding-board, and other parts of the delicate structure, indispensable to produce infinitely minute vibrations, the control of which by his master hand created tones which enabled him to charm his hearers as none of his rivals could.

I regard the independent metallic frame for holding the strings of pianos as an invention which would do honor to any professional mechanician ; and I contemplate with much satisfaction the circumstance that my departed friend intrusted to me the construction of the first specimen of his important improvement.

I am, my dear Mrs. Bull,

Yours very sincerely,

J. ERICSSON.

Mr. Ericsson had previously written of Ole Bull: "So warm a heart and so generous a disposition as his I have never known." These words, it may be truthfully said, express the sentiment and the judgment of the violinist concerning the great engineer and inventor.

Professor H. Helmholtz, whose works on tone Ole Bull had carefully studied, says of the violinist in a letter written in May, 1881 : —

I saw that he was thoroughly well informed as to the mechanical problems concerning the violin, which came in question. . . . I was much impressed by his personal character ; he was at the same time so enthusiastic and

so intelligent, interested in all the great problems of humanity.

The pleasantest incident of his concert tour in the season of 1871-72 was a visit he made to his friend, Mr. William H. Seward, in Auburn, N. Y. The two delightful days spent at Mr. Seward's house relieved the tedium of the whole trip.

The summer of 1872 he was in Norway, and in the fall returned again to the United States, giving some seventy-five concerts, with his usual success, during the winter. The last concerts announced were given up, on account of the illness of his infant daughter.

In the spring he returned to Norway, and occupied for the first time the new house which had been built at Lysö during his absence. The winter following was mostly passed in Southern France. While on a visit to Florence, he met again his old friend Prince Poniatowsky, and also many others whom he had known nearly forty years before, when he had been made an honorary member of the Philharmonic Society of that city. Professor Sbolczis urged Ole Bull to permit his friends to hear him, offering the aid of his own orchestra; and not only the importunity of his friends, but the thought of again trying his power over such an audience as the city of the Arno can offer, tempted him to play. The hall



was crowded, the tickets having been taken by storm, and the performers suffered considerable inconvenience therefrom. But to this an Italian readily accommodates himself under such circumstances.

Brizzi, the leader of the "Orfeo," now claimed that what Ole Bull had done for Sbolczis should also be granted to his celebrated band of performers, and offered to secure for the concert the largest hall in the city, one that could hold nearly five thousand people. Ole Bull consented, and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. In the orchestra sat old men who had accompanied Paganini — "And here he is again," they cried. The *Corriere Italiano* said of the concert:—

The Teatro Pagliano yesterday presented an imposing scene. Every part was full to overflowing. The most distinguished families and the ladies of the highest circles, including the Grand Duchess Marie of Russia, whose frequent applause showed how intensely she enjoyed the music, were present at the concert; also Commodore Peruzzi and wife, Princess Carolath, Princess Strozzi, and an immense number of musical amateurs of our artistic and aristocratic society. . . . The chief honors of the concert were given to the Norse Paganini, the original, inspiring, great violinist, Ole Bull, who kindly contributed his valuable assistance, and paid his respects to the "Orfeo." His artistic nature prompted him to this graceful act of fraternal cour-

tesy, the value of which is extraordinary, because he himself is extraordinary, — he, the king of all violinists of the present time, the old formidable rival of Paganini. In the fantasy of the “Nightingale” he gave us an idea of his charming and wonderful skill. . . . In the “Carnival of Venice,” the frantic dance of the notes combined with the most graceful execution could not be excelled. Both pieces produced a storm of deafening applause. The audience desired the latter repeated, but, instead of this, the musician gave them the celebrated fantasy of Paganini on the no less celebrated song of Paisiello, “Nel cor non più mi sento,” and in this we heard from Ole Bull the most secret beauties of song, the sweetness of the flute, the transitions of the violin to the viola, and to the sadness of the violoncello. In the “Polacca Guerriera,” one of his own compositions, burst forth the exciting and powerful notes of war. As a composer he was graceful, wild, full of imagination, feeling, and originality; as a performer he was mighty, wonderful, indescribable. At this point a golden wreath from the “Orfeo” was presented to Ole Bull, while the audience applauded rapturously. The old and handsome hero was visibly moved by the enthusiasm which he had evoked.

He wrote of that evening: —

My violin did not fail me. I was never more thrilled by its tone myself, and I cannot describe to you the pitch to which the excitement ran, or the warmth of my reception. I am so thankful that I have not disappointed my old friends.

From Florence he went to Rome to see Liszt, and he found there quite a colony of his countrymen.

The year following was spent in Norway. He had many vexations and troubles at that time; but the hospitable cheer and ever-affectionate welcome of his dear Lysekloster neighbors made these easier to bear. During the summer he visited the North of Norway — the “Land of the Midnight Sun” — for the first time. That trip was ever afterward a source of delightful reminiscences, and, every successive winter, a repetition of it for the coming summer would be suggested. He used graphically to picture for us the morning which gave him his first sight of the Lofoden Islands: the changeful, illusive beauty of sea and sky through the long day, every feature and outline of isle and coast being sharpened or softened by the play of brilliant light, now and then dimmed by the fitful shadow of a fleecy cloud; and how, towards midnight, all this culminated in a glory indescribable, the warm prismatic colors flooding sky and sea, not followed by twilight, but kindled anew by the beams of the rising sun suddenly shooting athwart the sky, the warmth and glow at last giving way to the tender flush of morning, and then to the white light of day. Then, too, he would tell how his fellow-travelers,



mostly Englishmen, were *ennuied* and indifferent the first days of the trip, but as they approached the North, and felt the influence of the champagne-like atmosphere, how they gradually yielded themselves to the charm of a new sensation, becoming social and even gay, some of them climbing the shrouds like boys; and confiding to him that they had never beheld a scene comparable for beauty, or felt such exhilaration.

At one of the coast villages, which was so small that a concert had not been thought of, they found the whole population turned out, and, with the recruits from the surrounding country, making an imposing array on the quay, which was decorated with evergreens and flags. Surprised at such a welcome, the captain and passengers good-naturedly agreed to wait till the concert could be given. As the steamer, gay with flags from stem to stern, passed out of the fjord, the mountains echoed with the repeated shouts and peals of cannon.

His countrymen received him everywhere with the warm-hearted hospitality they know so well how to dispense. But the dream of a repetition of that trip was never realized. Three years later he went as far north as Thronthjem, but mists and rain prevented a continuation of the voyage.

The celebration of his birthday in 1876 de-

serves some mention here. The following account is taken, with a few corrections, from Adolf Ebeling's "*Bilder aus Kairo*" (Stuttgart, 1878):—

On a beautiful September day in 1875, Ole Bull, by invitation, visited Drothingholm, the charming summer palace near Stockholm, and a favorite residence of the queen. A fine park and inviting gardens separate it from the busy world. Still it is only necessary to climb the heights near by, and a glorious panorama is spread out below. The bay of the Malar is seen filled with islands, and the sea dotted with large and small sails; and, on the other side, Stockholm itself, with its towers and palaces, its forest of masts in the harbor, and the dark-green mountains in the background.

The queen, now convalescent from a recent illness, was giving no audiences, but had expressed a desire to see the artist, and invited him to breakfast with the royal family. While at table the queen happened to mention Ole Bull's "*Saeterbesög*," her favorite composition. He was on the point of telling her that it was on the programme for one of his Stockholm concerts, but a glance from the king checked him, as she was not yet permitted the excitement of hearing music. At the same moment his majesty laughingly suggested: "You are about to undertake a new professional trip, Ole Bull. Perhaps you will visit Egypt. What do you say to playing the '*Saeterbesög*' on the top of the Pyramid of Cheops? Nothing of the kind has ever been done, and it seems to me that the idea might tempt a virtuoso." Ole Bull accepted the plan heartily, and the king

further suggested the 5th of February, the artist's birthday, as an appropriate time for the pyramid-concert. On taking leave, the royal pair most warmly wished him all success on his trip, especially the Egyptian portion of it.

After playing in Copenhagen, Berlin, Stettin, Hamburg, Lübeck, and Bremen, awakening the same enthusiasm as of old, we find him on the last day of January, 1876, in Brindisi, taking passage for Egypt, accompanied by an impresario and his pianist, the young Emil Bach. The trip was a pleasant one. At early dawn on the 4th of February Ole Bull stepped on shore at Alexandria, determined to carry out the "royal idea," as he called it. The same evening he reached Cairo, where the Swedish consul, to whom a telegram had been sent, met him at the station and took him to his hospitable home. Early the next morning, the 5th of February, several carriages were ready before the villa of the consul, who had sent word in haste to a few friends to invite them to share the trip; and about ten o'clock the party found themselves at the Pyramids, the goal of Ole Bull's journey. Some of the company were to ascend the Pyramid, and some to remain below; the latter were in the minority, and were mostly ladies with a few elderly gentlemen. The oldest of all was Ole Bull himself, but he had already mounted the first ten blocks of the huge structure alone and unaided. The powerful son of the Norse mountains, to whom, in his boyhood, no crag or peak was too high to be scaled, declared that, in spite of the sixty-six years which he was celebrating, he should be ashamed to have foreign arms



help him to the top. But the carrying up of his violin was a matter of great concern and anxiety to him. Wrapped in a silk handkerchief, it was intrusted to one of the most stalwart of the Bedouins, and the bow, protected in the same way, was given to another muscular fellow. After a quarter of an hour's climb, Ole Bull stood first of all upon the small world-famed plateau, and greeted the Norse flag which the consul had had raised there. Gradually the rest of the guests came also; but from all sides clambered and crowded the Bedouins, for the report had quickly circulated that a king of the North had sent a player down to the Pyramids. Had they known of it in Cairo, the tourists would certainly have flocked thither in crowds.

Ole Bull had now taken his violin and given two powerful strokes to assure himself that it was in good condition after its dangerous journey. He then drew himself up to his full height, and let his penetrating glance wander along the horizon for a few moments, to scan the wonderful scene below. At his right lay the valley of the Nile with its bright green fields stretching into vanishing distances, the waves of that broad, majestic stream gleaming like molten silver; to the left lay great, boundless, golden deserts and the Libyan Mountains; before him, at his feet, he had the wide-spreading city of the khedive, with its minarets, domes, and palm-gardens, all bathed in the brilliant sunlight. Now he suddenly began to play a hymn of praise, as it seemed; it was like a cry of joy to the Fates who had vouchsafed him to stand there and to behold, with his own eyes, the magnificent picture, the goal of so many

desires. Then he turned towards his home in the North, and began his own mountain-song, the "Saeter-besög." . . . In the pure, calm air of this height, — the loftiest of all structures made by human hands, — the tones were so clear and penetrating, and at the same time so powerful, that we felt ourselves moved as by magic power and thrilled to our inmost souls; then, again, they wailed like soft maiden voices — it was the home longing, the cry to the Norway mountains; and then, again, we heard the hero's song of triumph, proud of his beautiful fatherland.

As Uhland makes the Münster Tower shake when the young Goethe writes his name upon it, —

"Von seinem Schlage knittern  
Die hellen Funken auf,  
Den Thurm durchfährt ein Zittern  
Vom Grundstein bis zum Knauf," —

so those tones must have reverberated to the centre of this royal grave of six thousand years within the Pyramids. And that this beautiful, poetic moment should lack nothing, there rose, just as the master gave the last strokes of his bow, two majestic pelicans from the valley of the Nile, which swept with the silvery sheen of their wings towards the north, as if they would take the message of this happy event to Ole Bull's home. The Bedouins, children of nature, who, during the playing, lay in a circle, motionless as fallen statues, sprang up when the master had finished, as if electrified, and shouted aloud and repeated "Allah! Allah!"

Thus Ole Bull had kept his promise. Returning to Cairo he telegraphed the king, and the next forenoon

received the royal reply. The telegrams were as follows :—

“To King Oscar, Christiania, Norway, —

“According to my promise at Drotningholm, I played, on this my sixty-sixth birthday, on the top of Cheops’ Pyramid, in honor of Norway and its beloved king, my “Saeterbesög.”

The king answered :—

“I thank you heartily for your telegram, and the queen and myself are rejoiced at all your successes.”

The artist’s singular journey to the Pyramids was soon known in Cairo, and the khedive, during an audience, complimented him on his courage and youthful strength. Ole Bull gave a concert at the Opera House, and harvested laurels, flowers, wreaths, and poems. His “Tarentella” and “Carnival of Venice” were especially admired. He played them with unwonted fire, accompanied as he was by the admirable Italian orchestra, under the leadership of his old friend Bottesini ; but his Norse “Saeterbesög” was not heard again.

Ole Bull returned to America in time to visit the great Centennial Exhibition at Philadelphia. Offers from managers came at once, desiring him to appear in concerts. He arranged with local managers in the principal cities, and he never assumed again the burden of his own concert company. His engagements were made on a new plan, which relieved him of all responsibility outside his own performances. The time had come when it seemed right that his own comfort



and pleasure should be the first consideration. He played by contract never more than three times a week, and the hours for travel were limited. It is but just to mention in this connection that all the engagements filled from 1876 to 1880 were satisfactory as to the management and courtesy of the gentlemen who arranged for his concerts, and he had the pleasure of being associated with many distinguished artists.

He first appeared in Music Hall, Boston, and after an absence of six years the audience seemed most kindly determined to convince him of their warm welcome. As he entered they rose to their feet, and the applause was long continued. He gave that season, in Boston, nine concerts to crowded houses, and the great desire of the public to hear him so often was a surprise and a pleasure to him. One occasion should be specially mentioned.

The great interest which he felt in the recognition of the Norsemen's discovery of America, not only in and for itself, but because it may have given a hint to Columbus, who visited Iceland, made Ole Bull desire to bring this subject before the people of Boston; and an invitation signed by many gentlemen, prominent in social, political, and literary circles, urging him to give one more concert, afforded him an opportunity of doing this.

The matter was therefore talked over with friends, and subsequently a committee was appointed for the erection of a monument to Leif Ericsson, commemorative of the event.

It is hoped that this undertaking is to be carried out and completed in the near future. Ole Bull's friends know how earnest he was in promoting it; and in Mr. Thomas G. Appleton, the chairman of the committee, he found a liberal and enthusiastic helper. Many others, beside his own countrymen, were interested in the plan, as will be seen from the remarks made by Rev. Edward Everett Hale at the concert, and reported below.

The concert was given in Music Hall, which was elaborately and tastefully decorated for the occasion. Mr. Curtis Guild, who introduced the artist, said: —

I have been deputed by his Excellency Governor Rice, his Honor Mayor Cobb, and other members of the committee, with whom I have the honor to be associated, to present to you one of whom it with truth may be said that he needs no introduction to a Boston audience. . . . From the commencement of his career in this country, when an entranced audience listened to his wonderful melody at the Melodeon, in May, 1844, to the present time, a period of more than thirty years, the citizens of Boston, more especially those of musical culture, have recognized Ole Bull as a great musical artist, and one whose composition and performance commanded the tribute, that only true genius can exact. . . .

Ole Bull's reply in acknowledgment of his reception was thus reported in the *Daily Advertiser*:

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, —I see here among the audience stars of the first magnitude. Why should they address me? What am I that I can stand before this audience and address such stars as these? I am but an atom of failure in the universe; yet you are all united with me in that failure in that you have indorsed me. You belong to me and I belong to you. [Applause.] But to explain to you the relation in which I stand here, and the names you see about me [referring to the names Thorvald, Thorfinn, Leif, and Washington], and how they are connected together, I allow myself to say a few words. Everybody in this audience knows that in the year 984 Bjarne sailed to meet his father in Greenland. He was driven south, and after a long voyage came at last to a beautiful land, which he went back and reported he had seen. Fourteen years after, in 1000, his son, Leif Ericsson, took his ships and proceeded to seek that land; and he came along by Newfoundland and the coast of Nova Scotia, and further down to what he called Vineland, because he found vines there. He remained the fall and winter there, and then sailed back again to Iceland. Then two years after, his brother Thorvald went over and met his death near Martha's Vineyard. In 1831 they discovered his body in armor. His body was taken to Boston, and the armor was analyzed, and they found it was the same metal that the Norsemen had used in the ninth and tenth centuries. It had the same ornaments they had used, so there could



be no doubt to whom it belonged. But, unfortunately, the armor was lost by fire, and that calamity which we both share together was an atom of fate that clings to us. You lost the armor, but there was one who could give it to posterity, and I say, almost to eternity, and that was our illustrious star, Longfellow. [Applause.] It was given for him to do it in his "Skeleton in Armor."

Now what connection has the name of Thorfinn to Washington? Washington not only belongs to the whole world of the present generation, for that would be little to say, — he belongs to all future generations. What you educate is not for you alone, but it is for the whole world. The name of Washington stands as the greatest pinnacle of glory. It signifies liberty, it signifies everything that ennobles man. [Applause.] We find in the recent discoveries concerning his ancestors, that they came over in a ship, but that his ancestors' name was Thorfinn. Well, Thorfinn is a Norwegian name, and it is not very easy to see how Thorfinn could be changed to Washington. But we see every day that strangers come here, and after some little time they change their names to some other taken from the new surroundings. We see it in Norway, often, that a man who has taken a new farm takes his name, not from the ancient farm but the new farm. And this is the connection of the ideas which prompted me to come here to-night and have the honor to reply to the memory of Washington and the memory of the Revolution, which delivered not only America from oppression, but the whole world. Now I beg leave to take my instrument in order to explain the rest.

After an account of the concert, during which the artist "seemed stirred, by the sympathy of his hearers, to a sympathy, intensity, and vividness of style unwonted even to himself," the *Advertiser* continues : —

Near the close of the performance, the Rev. E. E. Hale rose in his place on the floor, and said he supposed it was known to every person present that the distinguished artist had spent almost the whole of his active life in knotting those ties which connected his country with ours. It was hoped that in some future time there would be erected a physical memorial to the early discoverers of whom he had spoken. It was the wish of those about him [Mr. Hale], at whose request he spoke, that Boston should not be behind in any expression of gratitude to him [Ole Bull] for his work, as well as in expressing interest in our Norse ancestors. He was sure he spoke the mind, not only of the audience, but of all New England, when he spoke of the interest with which he regarded his countrymen, whom they regarded as almost theirs. He remembered, although it was nearly forty years ago, when much such an audience as he saw about him cheered and applauded Edward Everett, when the early discoveries had just been made, and, when in one of the last of his public poems he expressed the wish that the great discoveries of Thorvald might be commemorated by Thorvald's great descendant, the Northern artist, Thorwaldsen. The last words of that poem as it died upon the ear were, —

"Thorvald shall live for aye in Thorwaldsen."

He, the speaker, thought it was a misfortune for New England that the great northern artist died before he could accomplish this wish. But New Englanders had never forgotten it, and had never forgotten their Norse ancestors. It was an enterprise which ought to engage Massachusetts men, — the preservation of a physical memorial of Thorvald, Leif, and Thorfinn, — and he suggested that the committee which had arranged the meeting should become a committee of New England, in conjunction with Mr. Appleton, to take this matter in special charge. Mr. Hale put a motion to this effect, and it was carried, and the committee constituted.

The holidays of that year were memorable. Thanksgiving found Ole Bull at the home of Professor Horsford in Cambridge, and he shared the Christmas cheer of Craigie House with the beloved poet; while on New Year's Eve, he watched the old year out and the new in with a few friends in the library of James T. Fields.

In the early months of that year he made an engagement for thirty concerts with his friend, Mr. Maurice Strakosch. He first gave four concerts at Steinway Hall, in New York, and had the honor of being assisted by Madame Essipoff. The *New York Herald*, of March 4, 1877, said: —

Age seems to have been contented with scattering snow upon his head, leaving untouched the fire of his genius. The lithe and agile figure has lost none of its elasticity, and the nerves are as steady as in the noon-



day of life. There is still the same nervous delicacy of touch and precision of execution, which, in the years gone by, charmed two continents and led the people of many lands in pleasant bondage after the car of the enchanting musician. The triumphs of to-day are destined to be no less great than those obtained in the past. Ole Bull, like a prince that had wandered from his own land and returned after a long absence, is restored to the throne he had abandoned by a delighted people; the memory of his great feats is not forgotten.

The New York audiences were remarkable for their size, as were those in the cities he visited east, south, and west. Miss Emma Thursby was now associated with him, and this first acquaintance with that great and charming artist resulted in a warm, personal friendship. The very last engagement Ole Bull filled was in conjunction with Miss Thursby, who was, he hoped, to accompany him to Norway, where he desired to present her himself to his countrymen; but, overtaken by the last fatal illness in England, he was so weak on reaching home that waiting friends were advised of the impossibility of even a visit. The following summer, Miss Thursby paid a most loving and tender tribute to her departed friend, by visiting Ole Bull's birthplace to add her generous gift to the memorial his countrymen are to erect, and won for herself the admiration and the affection of the Northmen, as she had that of Ole Bull before.

The press notices are reminders of the large audiences of 1876, and the pleasure manifested at the efforts of the artists. In some places, — in Brooklyn and Philadelphia, for instance, — not only the audience-room was filled to overflowing, but hundreds of extra seats were placed upon the stage, while large numbers were turned away. Describing such a scene, the *Philadelphia Press* said : —

And when Ole Bull appeared, what a right royal shout of welcome he received ! The wind waves almost could be felt, and the applause could be heard blocks away. . . . There is yet the delicacy of touch and the wondrous power that tells of genius without loss of lustre, and of the marvelous sympathetic instrumentation of his brightest years. Nardini's Sonata was the first selection, and it was superbly played. . . . The concert throughout was a most brilliant success, and may fairly rank as one of the great events in the musical history of Philadelphia.

To the last, these great audiences welcomed Ole Bull in the Philadelphia Academy, under the able management of Mr. Pugh.

The entire season was to the violinist an enjoyable one, since he was in perfect health and condition for his work. He had time to see his friends and to visit them, playing, as he did, at intervals only. He renewed many of the inti-

macies he had formed on his first visits to this country, which incessant work in previous years had compelled him, against his wish, to drop; and he found that he was not only not forgotten, but even better loved than he had thought.

After finishing his series of concerts, and only three days before his departure for Europe, a request came, signed by many distinguished names in New York, asking for still another appearance. He played, on the evening before he sailed, in Booth's Theatre, to a very full house, the stage and boxes being occupied by his friends. The artists were all inspired to do their best, and, after the "Ave Maria" of Gounod had been sung by Miss Thursby with Ole Bull's obligato, the audience seemed more determined than ever to recall the artist and to demand familiar airs. After the sixth encore he made a little speech, but it was not until he had responded to the tenth recall, for which he had given, "We won't go home till morning," that the audience, with the last waving of handkerchiefs and cheers, said good-by. Later, at a little supper at the hotel, the paper written by Dr. Crosby (printed in the Appendix to this volume) was produced and read for the first time—a surprise to Ole Bull. This labor of love so generously given when it meant hours of toil to an already overworked physician,



with illness at home, was the crowning kindness of the many showered upon him by loving friends. No man ever filled a larger place in Ole Bull's heart than Professor R. Ogden Doremus, who was present, and had made Dr. Crosby known to the artist; and how he wished that he might carry the two with him to his own beloved Norway, when they bade him good-by the next morning on the deck of the steamer! He felt a concern for Dr. Crosby's health which proved only too well founded, for in June came the sad news of his death, the result of overwork.

The Atlantic voyage was a rest in itself, for sea-sickness was unknown to Ole Bull, and he was a good person to cheer others who were unhappy on shipboard. The inevitable concert would be given the last evening of the voyage, and often on very stormy passages he had played to make others forget the fear and discomfort of the hour.

The summer of 1877 was quietly spent in Norway, and the winter was passed on the Continent in travel. In Brussels, among the friends who called on the artist was Vieuxtemps, then suffering from the effects of a paralytic stroke. When he would himself try Ole Bull's instrument his poor, numb hand could not obey his will; and at last he exclaimed, as he handed it back, "'Tis no

use, I *cannot* command my fingers!" His talk concerning style, composition, and virtuosity was most interesting, as were also the incidents of travel which he recalled. He said of Mendelssohn and Schumann, "Ils sont virtuoses parce qu'ils connaissent à fond leur art; ils sont virtuoses parce qu'ils sont de grands poètes. Ils le sont parce qu'ils ont le génie. Virtuosité, génie, sont deux termes à peu près synonymes, deux notions presque identiques." Vieuxtemps's indignation at the constant abuse of the term may be imagined.

Ole Bull had planned to go to Italy and Sicily for the winter, as he had long desired to revive and live over again the memories of his first visits to that sunny clime; but on his reaching Vienna in January, the time from week to week passed so delightfully, and old friends were so cordial, that all thought of going further south was given up. He had not intended to appear in public, and did so on a few occasions only. The general interest taken in his visit there and elsewhere by the press and the people surprised him. He busied himself while in Vienna with repairing violins for friends, with so much success that his acquaintances would urge him to direct the work on their instruments, which they wished adjusted according to his method, and he could seldom re-

fuse such a request. It sometimes seemed as if he were happier at work on an old decrepit fiddle, which he saw could be restored, than when playing on his own superb instrument.

While in that city he celebrated with friends the birthday of Madame Mathilde Marchesi. Among the guests at the musical party was Madame Christine Nilsson, and the hostess told with pride of a telegram she had just received from her favorite pupil, Gerster, whose brilliant success in America she predicted.

Nilsson recalled how when a little girl she had been admitted by the stage-door to one of Ole Bull's concerts in Sweden, and how, while the artist stood talking to a friend, she had asked to look at his violin, which he left in her hands when called away for a moment. On venturing to draw the bow she found to her delight that it "almost played itself."

The courtesy of Mr. Joseph Hellmesberger, Kapelmeister, with whom the artist played in public, was an incident of his stay which he remembered with much pleasure.

A visit was made to Pesth, where each day was sure to bring a charming note or thoughtful message from Liszt, whose kindly face often looked in upon his friend. The following missive was sent on the morning before Ole Bull left the city: —



*Mardi, 19 Février.*

MON ILLUSTRE, — Je vous prie amicalement de passer la soirée d'aujourd'hui avec Madame Ole Bull chez votre vieux collègue et dévoué ami,

FRANZ LISZT.

On se réunit à 9 heures.

(Il n'y aura pas de "violon" ni même de piano.)

At midnight, however, the violin was sent for at Liszt's request, and not till after two o'clock in the morning did the company disperse. The walk to the hotel along the fine river embankment in the brilliant starlight, with the wonderful tones still sounding in one's brain, cannot be forgotten. After a brilliant improvisation on the same motives which Ole Bull had chosen for the violin, Liszt had closed with a dreamy, tender nocturne.

The master's real interest in his friend's work was shown by his chiding him with warmth for the state of his musical manuscripts which he insisted on looking through, and which he earnestly entreated him to prepare for publication.

The following note brought Liszt himself in answer, and the last adieux were said: —

ILLUSTRE AMI, — En partant, le courage de vous remercier de vive voix de votre hospitalité princière me fait défaut. Vos précieux conseils, inséparables compagnons de votre âme, inséparables souvenirs de lumière

de notre réunion après tant d'années d'épreuves, sont gage sincère d'amitié — gage et promesse en même temps ! Ma chère femme, toute émue sous l'influence de votre génie si gracieux, me prie d'exprimer sa reconnaissance, et permettez-moi de souhaiter que l'Etre Suprême vous rende aussi heureux que possible ; voilà ce que désire ardemment

Votre dévoué admirateur et ami,

F. LISZT.

OLE BULL.

A month at the baths in Wiesbaden, where friends made the stay most pleasant, and a summer in the Norse home, followed. That summer home-coming was always a delight to Ole Bull.

The grand old mountains, weird and forbidding in the early spring storms but glorified by the Northern summer, called him, and he heard. The beloved Lysekloster valley, whose wooded slopes commanded the fjord, the sea, the islands, and the great range of the Hardanger; the road his childish steps had trod, winding its way down to the sea from the church of the old ancestral home, at every turn giving a picturesque glimpse of lake or cliff; the path shaded by birches and maples, and the fields fragrant with wood violets and lilies-of-the-valley; the cottagers at work, the red jackets of the women and caps of the men giving a dash of color here and there; the workers shouting their respectful "welcome back" as he

hurries down to the boat waiting to carry him to his own enchanted isle, — this was the picture which lured him every spring, and when realized gave him the happiest moment of the year.

From his eighth year he had loved Lysekloster, and often said that he would choose that of all places in the world for his home. In 1872 the estate was divided on the death of the owner, and the mansion itself came into the possession of a friend and schoolmate of Ole Bull, who, at his suggestion, bought the island opposite and decided to make a new home for himself there, thus fulfilling his boyish dream. The island had hardly been explored or its rocky shores visited by those living on the main land. Its tall pines had grown and rocked in the winds alone; its sod, except in one little spot, had never been broken; its lakes mirrored only the stars and clouds. From the foundation of the cloister on the main land seven hundred years before, it had been noted only as furnishing some of the largest and finest trees in the neighborhood for building purposes; but fortunately it was still well wooded with pine.

A visitor would find Ole Bull while there interested chiefly in the subject of drainage, the care of trees, and the grading of roads and paths, which he had himself laid out; strewn with white



sea-shells they could be seen from a height circling the lakes and opening up the island in every direction.

The little steamer gliding into the fjord at breakfast time seldom failed to bring one or more guests from town. Old or young, they were taken on walks of exploration about the island, and even the oldest were sure to catch the enthusiasm of their host. If fretted by a guidance which did not spare them a short cut over rough ground, down ravines and along never-ending turns of paths, so confusing that it was impossible to return alone, they forgave him later, when in his music they learned what such a walk had been to him.

The autumn days were the days for study. The guests had then gone, and sometimes a week of storm would succeed the brightest sunshine, and dark nights suddenly replace the long twilight. The walks then were to the farthest points out towards the sea, where the ocean symphony sounded loudest; the paths must also be explored to protect them from the miniature waterfalls overleaping their proper channels, or to save tree or shrub from the flood which threatened its destruction; but the fiercest storms could not disturb the tranquil lakes guarded by the pine-clad cliffs which furnished a quiet retreat on those

wild walks. Then came the contrast of the cozy room brightly lighted, and the tempting delicacy, or, better still, the old-fashioned dish reserved for such times by the faithful Martha.<sup>1</sup> How he enjoyed it all! The music-room cheerful with wood-fires and candles, while the storm without promised seclusion, tempted him to do the best work, often far into the night. When the fire and candles had burned low, and the shadows seemed the intruding spirits of the storm, then the notes would be thrown aside, and that wonderful instrument, a soul in the hand of its master, would voice the tempest outside and the peace within. Never did the picture of him drawn by Longfellow in the "Tales of the Wayside Inn" seem more strikingly true than in that room and at that hour: —

Before the blazing fire of wood  
Erect the rapt Musician stood ;  
And ever and anon he bent  
His head upon his instrument,  
And seemed to listen, till he caught  
Confessions of its secret thought, —  
The joy, the triumph, the lament,  
The exultation and the pain ;  
Then, by the magic of his art  
He soothed the throbbings of its heart  
And lulled it into peace again.

<sup>1</sup> Ole Bull's housekeeper for many years.

The exquisite pictures of the artist which appear later in the poem, breathing the Northern tradition and spirit, follow naturally here : —

Last the Musician, as he stood  
Illumined by that fire of wood ;  
Fair-haired, blue-eyed, his aspect blithe,  
His figure tall and straight and lithe,  
And every feature of his face  
Revealing his Norwegian race ;  
A radiance, streaming from within,  
Around his eyes and forehead beamed ;  
The angel with the violin,  
Painted by Raphael, he seemed.  
He lived in that ideal world  
Whose language is not speech, but song ;  
Around him evermore the throng  
Of elves and sprites their dances whirled ;  
The Strömkarl sang, the cataract hurled  
Its headlong waters from the height ;  
And mingled in the wild delight  
The scream of sea-birds in their flight,  
The rumor of the forest trees,  
The plunge of the implacable seas,  
The tumult of the wind at night,  
Voices of eld, like trumpets blowing,  
Old ballads and wild melodies  
Through mist and darkness pouring forth,  
Like Elivagar's river flowing  
Out of the glaciers of the North.  
The instrument on which he played  
Was in Cremona's workshops made,  
By a great master of the past,



Ere yet was lost the art divine ;  
Fashioned of maple and of pine,  
That in Tyrolian forests vast  
Had rocked and wrestled with the blast ;  
Exquisite was it in design,  
Perfect in each minutest part,  
A marvel of the lutist's art ;  
And in its hollow chamber, thus,  
The maker from whose hands it came  
Had written his unrivaled name, —  
“Antonius Stradivarius.”

And when he played, the atmosphere  
Was filled with magic, and the ear  
Caught echoes of that Harp of Gold,  
Whose music had so weird a sound,  
The hunted stag forgot to bound,  
The leaping rivulet backward rolled,  
The birds came down from bush and tree,  
The dead came from beneath the sea,  
The maiden to the harper's knee !

The following is from Part Second, written in  
1872:—

Meanwhile from out its ebon case  
His violin the minstrel drew,  
And, having tuned its strings anew,  
Now held it close in his embrace,  
And poising in his outstretched hand  
The bow, like a magician's wand,  
He paused, and said, with beaming face :  
“ Last night my story was too long ;  
To-day I give you but a song,

An old tradition of the North ;  
But first, to put you in the mood,  
I will a little while prelude,  
And from this instrument draw forth  
Something by way of overture."

He played ; at first the tones were pure  
And tender as a summer night,  
The full moon climbing to her height,  
The sob and ripple of the seas,  
The flapping of an idle sail ;  
And then by sudden and sharp degrees  
The multiplied, wild harmonies  
Freshened and burst into a gale ;  
A tempest howling through the dark,  
A crash as of some shipwrecked bark,  
A loud and melancholy wail.

Such was the prelude to the tale  
Told by the minstrel ; and at times  
He paused amid its varying rhymes,  
And at each pause again broke in  
The music of his violin,  
With tones of sweetness or of fear,  
Movements of trouble or of calm  
Creating their own atmosphere ;  
As sitting in a church we hear  
Between the verses of the psalm  
The organ playing soft and clear,  
Or thundering on the startled ear.

And again, in Part Third, is given this natural touch : —

The tall Musician walked the room  
With folded arms and gleaming eyes,  
As if he saw the Vikings rise,  
Gigantic shadows in the gloom ;  
And much he talked of their emprise,  
And meteors seen in northern skies,  
And Heimdal's horn and day of doom.

. . . . .  
Then in the silence that ensued  
Was heard a sharp and sudden sound  
As of a bowstring snapped in air ;  
And the Musician with a bound  
Sprang up in terror from his chair,  
And for a moment listening stood,  
Then strode across the room, and found  
His dear, his darling violin  
Still lying safe asleep within  
Its little cradle, like a child  
That gives a sudden cry of pain,  
And wakes to fall asleep again ;  
And as he looked at it and smiled,  
By the uncertain light beguiled,  
Despair ! two strings were broken in twain.

The future held for Ole Bull the rare fortune of being for one happy winter the neighbor of Mr. Longfellow.

Lingering as long as possible till there was but the shortest time to meet appointments, Ole Bull sailed from Norway in the fall of 1878 for the United States. So far as concerts were concerned, there is but the same story of a cordial



reception by the public and a pleasant winter. A few brief extracts from the many notices in the journals will suffice. He played in the principal Northern cities only.

The Boston *Journal* said of him : —

Ole Bull seems not a day older than he did a score of years ago, and certainly he has not lost a whit of his wonderful command over the violin.

The New York *Herald* of December 15th said in a long article : —

Taken as a whole, the art of the great virtuoso is distinctive, original, and full of rugged strength. It may be truly said of him that he is the poet of the violin, especially when illustrating his own splendid compositions.

And the *Tribune* remarked : —

His fervid nature and personal magnetism are as powerful as ever, and he sways the audience of to-day pretty much as he did their fathers and mothers, in spite of the fact that critical taste is not always satisfied with his methods.

The "Violin Notes," now first published, were written out that season, during the holidays, and he was experimenting on and developing the chin-rest.

The following characteristic anecdotes were related by a Brooklyn gentleman who called on Mr.

Colton to meet Ole Bull, and was shown to the door of the model work-shop. He writes: —

I knocked, at first hesitatingly, lest I might disturb the quiet that reigned within, broken only by the tones of Ole Bull's violin. Taking advantage of a pause, I knocked again, this time to be admitted by Mr. Colton, who forthwith presented me to the violinist. All my fear and embarrassment as to my reception were at once expelled by the pleasant greeting. His countenance was lit up by that same genial smile so well known to us all. . . . He explained that Mr. Colton was at work upon his famous Gaspar da Salo, while he was practicing on his beautiful Nicholas Amati. He seemed in such capital spirits that I ventured to ply question upon question, and all were answered with a perfect grace and simplicity. On his asking whether I had attended his last concert at the Academy of Music in Brooklyn, I replied, regretting my own engagement to play at a *soirée musicale* the same evening. "You play? What did you play at the *soirée*?" "‘L'Elegie’ by Ernst." "What, do you play that? Here," handing me his precious violin, "you shall play what I could not hear that night, and I will play for you what you could not hear." With great caution and greater reluctance I took the fine Amati, and the studded diamonds seemed to laugh at me from the keys they adorned. I had not proceeded far when he suggested a different interpretation of one of the weird phrases of that composition. I yielded and tried to express his idea, but, failing completely, handed him the instrument, and with

eagerness watched the movement and with better result. He then took the violin, straightened himself, and played the Paganini Concerto as I have never heard it played. He seemed completely lost to the surroundings. The very notes ring in my ears as I now think of that performance. Speaking of the German school of violinists, he objected to their heavy and coarse style of interpretation, saying, "The German plays his violin conveniently; that is, he would not play the *largetto* in *la* of Mozart on the D and A strings, but use the E for the A when convenient and A for D, and thus spoil the most beautiful of melodies." When I asked who was his favorite composer, he quickly exclaimed: "Mozart, yes, Mozart, and more, he is the most difficult composer to interpret." I remonstrating gently, saying that I thought his melodies were easily written, as stated by Mozart himself, and more easily understood than a Beethoven composition, he replied warmly, "Just so; because so easy and graceful, the more noticeable are the breaks of coarse interpreters, as, for instance, in their poor modulation in changing from one string to another." I must confess, his illustration on the violin corroborated his theories. Referring to Paganini, he said that it was next to impossible to play any one of his compositions as he played them; and apropos of the silly stories circulated throughout Europe during Paganini's time, they were simply the products of the conspiring minds of Lafont and his musical friends, who but too keenly felt the superiority of the dark Italian. "I shall never forget," he continued, "how Habeneck, the musical director,



told me of Paganini's reception in Paris. When Paganini went to rehearsal for the first concert, he was received with great coolness by the orchestra who were to accompany him. The first violins especially showed their contempt for their rival by playing an *ensemble pizzicato* movement for the left hand, as much as to say, You are not the only man that can do that. But Paganini's quiet remark, 'Gentlemen, you do not play in tune ; you had better practice scales before attempting that,' so completely upset them that they made no further efforts to discommode him. One of the tympani, however, persisted in beating out of time, which so exasperated Paganini that he shouted, 'Wait, I'll come there and make you play right,' and started towards him ; whereupon the fellow beat a hasty retreat, to the amusement of all as well as of Paganini himself."

Ole Bull once admiring the ability with which Malibran read music at sight, she challenged him, saying, "You cannot play anything, be it ever so intricate, but I can sing it after once hearing." Ole Bull played a caprice full of technical difficulties, but she sang it correctly ; and, said he, "I cannot, even at this day, after forty-five or more years, understand how she did it." He played it and I confess it was a labyrinth of musical phrases to me. . And thus the afternoon glided away, telling one anecdote after another. One which I am about to relate will show the goodness of his heart : "I was announced to play at Hartford, Connecticut. Arriving late in the afternoon I hurried to a barber-shop. While I was getting shaved, the boot-black, a colored boy, rattled off some lively tunes on a fiddle.

When I praised him he seemed pleased, saying, 'Yes, Mister, I can beat any man in Hartford.' Noticing how he worked and stretched to gain the high notes, I asked him if there were no other means of obtaining them. He gave me a look as much as to say, 'What do you know about a fiddle any how?' adding that there was no other way. I took his fiddle, and illustrated my suggestion by playing harmonics. The boy stood with open-mouthed wonder, and I, returning the instrument, left the shop. On reaching the street above, I could not refrain from looking down through the window. There he sat scratching his head and then the violin, the very picture of perplexity, trying to solve the mystery of harmonics. I sent him a ticket to my concert. After it was over I saw that negro boy standing in the aisle, battling with himself whether to come forward or not. I beckoned him, and with plaintive voice he said: 'Mister, can't you come down to the shop to-morrow to get shaved and show me those tricks? I feel powerful bad!' I promised him I would, and I kept my word."

The summer of 1879 was one of the happiest ever spent by the artist in Norway. One memorable day was when a party of friends went down to the little hamlet Lofthus in the Hardanger, to be immortalized, as Ole Bull told the peasants, because the composer Grieg had chosen to stay there for months and to write some of his best works. They had now come to celebrate his birthday. No spot could be more enchanting, so wonderfully blended were the beautiful and the

sublime in nature. The little study of one room, erected by the composer for perfect retirement, was perched half way up a rock and near the fjord. In the field above, the apple-trees were in bloom about an old farm-house, where the guests assembled. From the summit of the beetling cliffs not far away fell a beautiful waterfall, while the opposite mountain shore of the broad fjord, clothed with heavy forests of pine above and the feathery birch below, presented range after range of lofty peaks and domes, crowned by the great Folgefond with its eternal snow. The day was as perfect as friendship, music, and lovely surroundings could make it.

King Oscar and the young prince made a visit to Bergen that summer, and Ole Bull was proud of the escort of steamers, the crowds of honest, sturdy peasant faces, the refined but hearty welcome, and the imposing pageant which Bergen presented in greeting their sovereign. While the artist was standing on a height overlooking the harbor, the procession and bands discovered his presence as they moved along to take their position and welcome the ship on its entrance to the harbor with the royal guests; and each division of the long line halted in front below, the bands playing and the men cheering Ole Bull. This instant recognition and spontaneous expression of



regard was so constantly given him by his countrymen that it deserves mention. He proudly said that day that not another city in Europe could furnish so royal an escort as the fleet of steamers selected from the shipping in the Bergen harbor. Certainly, none could have given a more beautiful or loyal welcome. On the king's departure from Bergen, Ole Bull had, with the city authorities, the honor of accompanying their guests for one day along the coast. To the toast at dinner proposed by Ole Bull for the royal princes, in which, according to those present, he eloquently referred to the royal family and to the successive sovereigns whom he had personally known, the king responded by singing the three verses of Ole Bull's "Saeterbesög."

But only too soon came the time for departure from his home. On the last day and evening every part of the island was visited. It was in truth a farewell, and it now seems as if the last lingering looks rested with more than wonted tenderness on the spot he so loved; for it was the last time his foot pressed the soil, as on his next return he was borne in the arms of others to his home. His feeling for that scene is best expressed by himself. He once wrote:—

I have suffered so much,—no one knows how much, but He whose everlasting, superhuman love you have

to sustain you in everything noble and elevated. . . . How I am longing for Norway, for Lysö ! If you only knew the beauty of the "Clostrûm vallis lucida," as it was called in the year 1146, you would pine for it. I have never seen anything that attracts me so mysteriously ; so grand, so sweet, so sad, so joyous ! I cannot account for it. The atmosphere there has certainly a rare charm, and the woods, the ravines, and the lakes are so varied in expression ; but the grand views from the mountains must be seen with caution, or they will overpower you ; they make me feel thankful to God and weep in prayer for all enemies and friends.

On his return to the United States in the fall of 1879 it was decided to spend the winter quietly with family friends, and a residence with them was taken in Cambridge, Mass. It is pleasant to dwell upon the charming intercourse that made the months pass so swiftly, and two occasions may be mentioned here. The first was the celebration of Ole Bull's seventieth birthday, which has been so gracefully recalled by Mr. Appleton ; and the other, which came soon after, was the seventy-third anniversary of Mr. Longfellow's birth, when he invited the artist with a few friends to dine and spend the evening with him. The beautiful presence of the poet was a benediction to those about him ; and this, the last evening Ole Bull was with him, Mr. Longfellow, as it is now pleasant to recall, seemed especially to en-

joy. A friend of the poet, who was present, sent to the violinist just as he was to leave Cambridge this sonnet, which was written while his playing for Mr. Longfellow was still fresh in her memory:

TO OLE BULL.

How full of music's harmony and state  
Thy presence is, ere inspiration stirs !  
As on thy Norseland mountains tower the firs,  
Light with Norse glory when the hour is late ;  
But as when through their branches penetrate  
The winds, those gentle, mighty conquerors,  
Swelling their music all along the spurs,  
So breath of heaven thy form can agitate,  
Thy searching power can in a little space  
Undo the door where wordless thoughts are pent.  
Philosopher and poet, even these  
Expression of their dimmest secrets trace,  
As if their soul were in thine instrument,  
Unprisoned slowly and by sweet degrees.

CHARLOTTE FISKE BATES.

Among the valued letters written in answer to the birthday summons was this pleasant response from Mr. Whittier :—

OAKKNOLL, DANVERS, 2<sup>nd</sup> Mo. 1, 1880.

DEAR MRS. BULL, — I am extremely sorry that the state of my health will not permit me the great pleasure of calling on thee and thy gifted husband on the occasion of his seventieth birthday. I have a happy memory of meeting him some years ago and talking with



him of his wonderful art. While it is a matter of regret to me that I know little of music, and can scarcely distinguish one tone from another, I am not insensible of "the concord of sweet sounds," and I know something of the delight of those who "carry music in their hearts." I would be glad to join with those who are able to testify in person their high regard for the great musician, who, as one of the rare interpreters of poetry and harmony, has made the world his debtor; and who brings to us from his native land its voices and melodies, the lapsing waves of its fjords, the storm-song of the wind, the rustle of the birch groves, the murmur of its pines and the laugh of children, and the low of cattle and song of milk-maids on its summer mountains.

Give him the best wishes of one who is two years his senior that, to use an Irish phrase, the years to come may only bring "more power to his elbows" and make him happy in making others happy.

Very truly thy friend,                    JOHN G. WHITTIER.

Mr. Thomas G. Appleton's account of the birthday gathering is as follows: —

#### OLE BULL'S SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.

The date, February 5, 1880, is a very memorable one to many of us, for in some sense then we heard the swan-song of the great Norwegian.

It was one of those impromptu *fêtes* which, when successful, snatch a grace beyond the reach of art. Such occasions have the freshness of a rose suddenly plucked, with the dew and the bloom which disappear if kept waiting too long. It was the seventieth birthday of

Mr. Ole Bull, and soon after he left us for his native land, never to return.

There was a little domestic conspiracy shared in somewhat by outside friends to make this *fête* a pleasant surprise to the object of it. The nearest intimates of Mr. Ole Bull were summoned secretly and in time to prepare their tributes of respect and affection, and the scene of this gathering had memories of its own, suitable, harmonious, and poetic. For Mr. Bull was then living at Elmwood, the home of our present ambassador to London, Mr. J. R. Lowell. In his drawing-room, where pictures of J. R. Stillman, Christopher Cranch, and other friends hung upon the paneled walls, there was an aroma of scholarship, of wit and fancy, in keeping with the old mansion, which shares with the residence of Mr. Longfellow an old-time dignity, a colonial pomp, as if to emphasize the genius of the poets with the added charm of antiquity. Communicating with the drawing-room is Mr. Lowell's study. It was those study-windows which gave the title of one of his pleasantest books, and there indignation sharpened the shaft of satire which made the humor of the "Biglow Papers" a national event.

One by one in the fading twilight the friendly conspirators arrived. Mr. Bull was detained by unsuspected constraint in a neighboring family till the suitable moment for his appearance arrived. He could hardly have forgotten the date of so important an anniversary, yet in the fine simplicity of his nature one could see how unconscious he was of the delightful plot in which he was involved. When it broke upon him

little by little it was beautiful to witness the mild surprise, the questioning astonishment, displaced by an affectionate ardor and cordial recognition of its significance. As the world knows, there is something fascinating, individual, and characteristic in the countenance of the great artist. Geniuses often, while most individual themselves, are yet the highest expression of national characteristics. Mr. Bull looked the mystic land to which he owes his birth. Seeing him, one better understood the Sagas which tell of the heroes who launched, a thousand years ago, their galleys over stormy seas to conquest. His smile, so sweet and genuine, lingered round his mouth, as the sunshine sweetens the northern valleys, while fancy could think it saw in his streaming locks of silver the icy crests above or the flickering of the pale aurora of the North. Among the presents of this birthday was a violin wholly composed of flowers, their harmonies, though silent, suggesting in a fresh way the melodies which lingered in the memory of all. A disk, also of flowers, displayed at its centre the word "skaal," the proper word for the occasion. There were aquarelles and heaped-up baskets of flowers, and whatever suitable gift individual love prompted to bring. When the artist had received our salutes and hand-shakings, and smiles had warmed all with a common purpose, Ole Bull felt that he had but one thing to do, to reply to the spoken and silent messages of good-will in the language he loved best, — the one best suited to the occasion. And, standing in our midst, his snowy locks falling forward across his bent and sympathetic face, he bade his violin speak for



him. He played with his whole heart an answer, a swan-song of melody, on which, as upon a great river, we were carried away into dreamland, into the Valhalla and the halls of Odin. His skill, the vigor and power of his bow arm, belied the seventy years they celebrated. Time had left as iron that wonderful right arm which never could grow old. A distinguished artist answered the violin with a voice into which was gathered the responsive cordial enthusiasm of all, and with these two musical expressions Mr. Ole Bull's *fête* was accomplished. Supper and the tumult of chat, laughter, and content took off pleasantly the acute edge of excitement. Then later we were summoned away from the piano to the drawing-room, where a huge cake in frosted sugar displayed the name and age of the great artist. Amid much merriment it was cut and shared, each one eagerly hunting for the symbolic tiny golden violin, somewhere hid in its capacious flanks. When the little treasure was discovered it was found to have most suitably fallen to one of the oldest and dearest of friends, who was, perhaps, the nearest neighbor of them all in Cambridge. After the cake had been divided and the golden violin discovered, a venerable bottle of Tokay was produced, which Professor Horsford had brought home from his Austrian sojourn: this liqueur-like wine having been distributed in little glasses, Mr. Longfellow proposed the health and happiness of Ole Bull, which was drunk in a silence meaning more than words.

Thus ended a happy evening, a memorable birthday, sacred now as the last communion of love and music, between the poet of the North and that throng which

could have been multiplied a hundred times over if all those who have held in dear regard the great artist could have found admittance to that little room.

In March and April Ole Bull appeared in a few concerts in the principal Eastern cities with Miss Thursby. His last appearance but one in New York was for the benefit of the *Herald* Fund for the starving Irish, at the request of Mr. Edwin Booth, who planned and carried out most successfully a dramatic and musical entertainment. Good as was the cause, it was more for the sake of the originator of the plan that Ole Bull responded with pleasure. During that winter he had the opportunity of giving the Boston Philharmonic Society his assistance; and he also played for the Philharmonic Association in Cambridge, where he was honored by an audience that might well inspire any artist to his best efforts.

Late in June, with a pleasant party of friends, Ole Bull sailed the last time for Europe. He had not been feeling well for a month before, but the physicians consulted assured him that a sea-trip was all that he needed to bring relief. The first days out revived him somewhat, and no anxiety was felt; but later, what seemed a violent attack of sea-sickness, the first he had ever suffered, reduced his strength. At Liverpool he revived, and the physician thought a few days' rest

would quite restore him, but more violent symptoms soon appeared, and great concern was felt as to his being able to bear the journey to Norway, on which he insisted when he found he was not improving. Dr. Moore, of Liverpool, accompanied him. The trip across the North Sea was finally accomplished, but at great risk, and when at last the little fjord steamer came alongside to bear the invalid to his home, a prayer of thanksgiving filled all hearts. As the steamer glided gently onward the restful calm brought a sweet sleep, and all the surroundings seemed to breathe a promise of health. As Ole Bull approached Lysö he wakened, and how earnestly, how gratefully he gazed on his beloved mountains in their calm majestic beauty at that early morning hour! After the first day of exhaustion the sufferer seemed to gain steadily, until a complete recovery was looked for. Those days were full of happiness and blessing.

Professor E. N. Horsford, a valued and dear friend of many years, made his first and long-promised visit to Norway that summer. His description of the island and of the artist's homecoming was written shortly after. He says:—

I first saw Lysö in the twilight of Norwegian midsummer. It was from the steamer *Domino*, on my voyage across the North Sea from Hull, by way of Stavan-



ger, to Bergen. The island may have been seven or eight miles away. Its irregular domes of dusky green were but dimly outlined upon the bank of wooded mountains beyond. It was too late to see clearly. Distant objects had begun to look weird, and the sky was shadowy. We were approaching the region of long twilights — the kingdom of the midnight sun ; besides, the eyes were fatigued with the endless succession of unfamiliar forms. All day we had been sailing along inhospitable shores, and among rocky islands, scantily covered with vegetation. Now and then, in less exposed situations, fishing hamlets with sunny red roofs had come in sight ; we had taken in review the openings into narrow fjords with opposing cliffs, and repeated collections of runic columns, with the commanding monument to Harold Haarfager, the first king of Norway. All these were in the foreground, while in the distant eastern horizon, spread upon the table-land and covering the lofty mountain range, was the majestic glacier of the Folgefond. These had challenged attention, and in their novelty, or picturesqueness, or grandeur, had fascinated us ; but the spot about which the abiding interest centred only came into view when it was too late to more than make out its general position in the Björne Fjord at the foot of the Lyshorn. Soon after crossing the Björne Fjord, we swept past a column of ships of the inward bound Loffoden fishing fleet, stern and stately, with their antique prows and huge single square sails ; and entered the crowd of countless lesser fishing vessels and iron steamers, and came to anchor in the harbor of Bergen.

My next view of the island was from the little steam-boat landing near Lysekloster, the point on the mainland where one takes boat for Lysö. The island is scarcely more than half a mile from the wharf, and from other points on the mainland the distance is less.

We had driven from Bergen, some eighteen miles over a mountain road. Near the end, the way led down past the ruins of Lysekloster, a relic of the eleventh century, with its many remains of halls, refectory, chapter-house, cloisters, rude stone coffins, and ruder inscriptions; past the fine old mansion of the Nicolaysons, whose estate shares the name of Lysekloster; past the antique chapel, where the gathering peasant women still wear a costume suggesting the monastery; down to the wharf where we were to cross the narrow Lysefjord to the home of Ole Bull. On our left, the high mainland stretched away in a southerly direction for a mile or more, and then turned sharply to the west beyond the island. On the right, the bare, rocky headlands jutted irregularly out for many miles toward the broad entrance to the Björne Fjord. In a little bay under the slope of the Lyshorn, and a few rods from the wharf, giving a touch of surprising grace to the scene, were two stately swans. This was, we learned, a favorite resort, to which they made occasional excursions from their island home. Immediately before us was Lysö, a series of granite domes of unequal height, half covered with birch and evergreen above, half carpeted with heather and moss below. No trees had been felled. There was scarcely a trace of disturbed surface except in the narrow foot-paths that led up from the shore.

There were two little wharves, one near the boat-house, and low, red tile-roofed cottage of Haldor-Lysö, the family servant; the other under the bluff on which stood the imposing mansion of the proprietor.

Of other structures there were none on the island. There were no beaches; there was no gravel. The rocky cliffs of Norway, here as elsewhere, and uniformly, rise almost with the sharpness of a wall from the sea. If gravel there be at the foot of the precipices, it must be far down in the water. Above, the pines and spruces and feathery birches start from fissures in the rocks, and soar away to great heights, giving to the island a fleecy air of indescribable beauty, and to the inner fjord the soft seclusion of an inland sea.

Across this sheet of water we were rowed by Haldor. In the distance, the American and Norwegian flags were waving their welcome. The deep green of the Norway pines gave the finest relief to the Hall. It stands upon a shelf. The first story leans against the mountain. The second story, and the Byzantine turret rising above the roof at the corner nearest the brow of the bluff, are clearly defined against the dark foliage.

A large, open tower, with winding stairs midway on the long side of the Hall, and rising from the ground far above the eaves, gives, with its richly-decorated panels, brilliant entrance to the reception room below and the music hall above. The apartment devoted to music, occupying the whole width of the house, with two thirds of its length, and the entire height of the second story to the roof, is finished throughout in unstained spruce. Rows of slender clustered and twisted



columns rise to support an elaborate system of delicately and curiously wrought arches. The two concert grand pianos, embodying the inventions to which so much thought had been given, and from which the inventor hoped so much of advancement to the art, were here.

Turkish and Persian carpets and rugs were spread upon the floor or suspended between the columns. On one side, the whispers of the mountain pines came in through the open windows. Through the windows opposite you saw the fjord and the highlands beyond in undisturbed natural beauty. How fitting! In what keeping with the spirit that inspired the whole! Without and within, the perpetual fragrance of the balsam and birch. Everywhere quiet; no rattle of carts, no noise of hurrying trains, no hum of business. Everywhere repose, only to be invaded by human voices or music, or the soft lapping of the waves at the base of the cliff, or the sighing of the south wind among the swaying pines.

The shelf of rock on which the Hall stands is about fifty feet above the water, and some two or three hundred feet below the highest point on the island. Immediately around the narrow plot which spreads out on the sides and front is a dense border of roses and flowering and decorative shrubbery; and along the retreating slopes, here and there, room has been found for beds of strawberries and small groups of fruit-trees. A quarter of a mile northward is the cottage of the servant who cares for the grounds and mans the yacht and row-boat. Of roadways, properly speaking, there are none; but

bridle and foot-paths penetrate every part of the six hundred acres of the island, winding in and out, and up and down, through the dells and glens, and by the caverns, for twenty miles or more in all, from the shores to the summits of the highest peaks. As there are no beaches, so there are no pebbles for walks, and the surface, a coating of broken shells, is gathered from below the sea, at some distant point, from which they were brought in vessels. There are two little lakes nestling among the hills, and there are two or three little meadows, resting upon beds of peat, from which the product is annually gathered.

Standing on one of the higher peaks of the island, you look northward upon the Lyshorn, a bold, rocky cone, skirted with evergreens, and lifting its bare summit twelve hundred feet from the sea. At its foot are the undulating meadows and picturesque group of Lysekloster. On the west, the eye, glancing down the Björne Fjord, takes in the chain of lofty, dark islands beyond the channel pursued by the steamers approaching Bergen from the south. On the east the mainland half embraces the island, approaching at the nearest point within a few rods of the bold cliffs that fall sheer into the sea. On the south lies the broad entrance to the Hardanger Fjord, the most extended, unique, and famed of the Norwegian water highways.

A few days after our arrival at the island, the great musician and sufferer was brought to his longed-for home. The tender care of thoughtful kindred, and the ever busy, lifelong friend of the family, Martha,<sup>1</sup> full of

<sup>1</sup> The housekeeper.

affectionate solicitude, had made every needed preparation. Gentle hands bore him on his couch from the steamer to the centre of the grand music hall. Faint and worn and weak, he was at last under his own roof. How gratefully fell on his waiting sense every familiar sound and form ! Above and around him were the vistas of arches and clustered columns he had planned ; a very Alhambra of fairy architecture. How often through these galleries, in happier days, he remembered, had so sweetly thrilled the strains of his favorite Gaspar de Salo ! There was the organ that later, at his wish, yielded from the touch of love and anguish the sweet requiem of Mozart. The windows, distantly screened by oriental hangings, were open to the sympathetic trees, whose incense was so full of the associations of youth and the days of strength. The moan of the burdened pines was hushed. Was it too much to hope there might be, in this spontaneous recognition and welcome, the breath of life to the prostrate friend ? What air could be more grateful than one's native air, washed with all the waves of the Atlantic, and surcharged with the balm of the evergreens of Norway ? Did the fevered invalid need water to quench his thirst or to bathe his brow ? The freshly-fallen dew could not be purer or more clear than the water that welled from Lysekilde, under the rock a few rods away.

Was there a delicacy that affection or medical skill could suggest or devise for a reluctant and fastidious palate ? Devotion and utmost culinary art had provided for its instant preparation. Every attention that never-wearying love and forethought could secure were be-



stowed upon the dear sufferer. A few days in this restful home so far revived his strength that he was able to see the friends who had come to visit him ; but as the physician saw ground for believing that, with absolute quiet, the lost health might be regained, the stay was not prolonged.

During the visit a most touching incident occurred, illustrating the tender affection felt for Ole Bull throughout Norway. The annual encampment of militia troops at Ulven, a few miles from Lysö, broke up. The regiments, embarked upon a fleet of steamers, on their way to Bergen, the point for disbanding, necessarily passed a short distance outside of Lysö. The fleet was conducted through the inner fjord, that opportunity might be given to show the sympathy and affection of the troops for the man whose music had so often entranced them. The foremost vessel of the fleet, with the military band, came slowly to rest immediately under the windows of the music hall. Ole Bull, too feeble to present himself, directed his great American flag with the Norwegian arms in the escutcheon (the gift of the New York Philharmonic Society) to be run out from the window overlooking the fjord. Immediately the band played with infinite sweetness an original composition of the master. This was followed by a superb ancient Norwegian air, to which Björnson had written the words ; and this was succeeded by the proud national hymn. At the close, dipping its flag, the head of the fleet silently moved away. The successive vessels slowly following, dipped their flags in turn, and passed on around the island to resume their course.

Alas ! that this fleet should have been the herald of the convoy of steamers that, a few weeks later, gave such mournful and impressive dignity to the sorrow of Norway, when the mortal remains of Ole Bull were borne by sea to their last resting-place in Bergen, where he was born.

A few days only after Mr. Horsford left came the sudden change, — the loss of strength, and the fear, on the part of those in charge of the case, that the illness would prove fatal. Never had a patient kinder physicians ; Dr. Moore being in constant attendance, and Dr. Wiesener, of Bergen, in daily consultation. The sick one bravely fought the disease at every step, and calmly awaited the issue. It has been said of another : “A devoted lover of religious liberty, he was an equal lover of religion itself, not in any precise dogmatic form, but in its righteousness, reverence, and charity.” This was true of Ole Bull. As his body weakened, his soul seemed the stronger, “and full of endearment and hope for humanity,” as Mr. Fields wrote of him. He gave the sweet assurance that life had been precious to him, and the dear smile lighted the way for all, as he passed beyond. One who was present wrote of that hour : —

Everything made the change remarkably free from the dark and terrible in death. The day was a beautiful,

quiet one, full of sunshine and gladness, and the fragrance of flowers. You know how lovely the surroundings are. I hope death may always seem to me as here, a happy, peaceful ending of suffering, and a quiet passing away into something nobler and better.

Another quotation from a letter written only for the eyes of friends will give the public feeling of the time and its expression : —

All honor is being paid our beloved by king and people. The king sent a telegram of condolence to Mrs. Bull, expressing his personal as well as the national loss. The city is in mourning, with hundreds of flags at half-mast, among them the royal standard. The common council of Bergen at once met, and offered a spot in the very centre of the old cemetery for the place of burial. It is a beautiful location. The newspapers are enclosed with broad lines of black, as never before, except for members of the royal family, and contain many tributes and accounts of his life.

On Friday last the *Kong Sverre*, one of the largest of the coast steamers, came out with friends to see the remains as they lay in state in the music room. On Monday the funeral ceremonies took place, and honors more than royal were indeed shown to our dear one. It seemed that all the patriotism, all the love of people and country, which have so characterized and distinguished his nature during all his long life, wherever he might have been, were now returned to him in this spontaneous outpouring of respect and love. On the morning of the day of burial the *Kong Sverre* came



again, bringing the family and intimate friends to attend the services here, which were held in the hall, and were very impressive, especially so to us, for whom the place has so many beautiful associations connected with his life and music. After a prelude on the organ played by his friend, Edward Grieg, there was prayer by the pastor, and singing of a poem written for the service; then followed an address, eloquent with feeling, by Mr. Konow (the grandson of Öhlenschläger), a neighbor and warm friend of Ole Bull. After music again, the casket, covered deep with most beautiful flowers, the gifts of friends, was borne by peasants down to the steamer, followed by the family and friends, leaving desolate the island which he had made a home, and so much loved. •The sad ride to Bergen was happily brightened by the sun. The steamer, on entering the large fjord which lies outside the harbor, was met by a convoy of sixteen steamers, ranged on either side — a wonderfully impressive escort. As the fleet approached the harbor slowly, guns fired from the fort and answered by the steamers echoed and reëchoed among the mountains. The harbor and shipping were covered with flags of all nations, at half-mast, the whole world paying its last tribute to a genius which the whole world had learned to know and love. The quay was covered thick with green juniper, and festoons of green draped its whole front to the water's edge. Every shop and place of business was shut; the whole population of the city stood waiting silent, reverent. As the boat touched the quay, and while the casket was being borne to the high catafalque, one of the artist's own melodies was played.

Young girls, dressed in black, bore the trophies of his foreign success ; his gold crown and orders were carried by distinguished men of Bergen. As the procession passed slowly along the streets strewn with green, flowers were showered on the coffin, and tears were seen on many faces ; but the silence was unbroken save by the tones of Chopin's funeral march, and the tolling of the church bells. At the house where Ole Bull was born, the procession halted while a verse of a poem written by a friend was sung. At the grave, pastor Wallum read the service, and spoke with feeling of the work and life of the departed, and the gratitude of his country.

Then Björnstjerne Björnson spoke to the assembled thousands as follows : —

Ole Bull was loved ; this we see to-day ; he was honored, but it is more to be loved than to be honored !

If we would understand this deep attachment from its inception, understand him, what he was, what he is to us, then we must go far back to the time when he first appeared among us.

We were a poor, a small nation, with glorious traditions of earlier times, starting afresh with longings not soon to be realized, longings for which we were sometimes mocked.

Even of our own intellectual and spiritual inheritance but few crumbs had fallen to us, Denmark having taken the loaf. They said we were incapable of an independent intellectual existence, and our best men believed this. A Norse literature was deemed an impossibility,

though the ample foundations were there to build upon ; an individual Norse school of history, a thing to be laughed at ; even our language was not acceptable unless spoken with a Danish accent and soft consonants ; a national theatre not even to be thought of.

Our political situation was equally unfortunate. We had been newly bought and sold, and what little liberty we had presumed to seize, and had succeeded in extending, gave us no security, but much concern.

We dared have no official celebrations, since it might offend in high places. But a young generation came, nourished on freedom, and without the fear and prudence of their elders, but with more of defiance, more of anger. They lived in the morning of freedom and honor, and in this dawn came Ole Bull's tones like the first rays of the sun over the mountain tops.

At that time the folk-melodies invaded our music, the democratic invaded the aristocratic, the national the abstract, the individual the formulated ideal. To our honor be it said, we followed.

Older men have told you of the giant form which suddenly stood forth, not in the low, no, in the highest places, before kings and the most cultured, and played with a wild power, possessed by only one man before, but in Ole Bull more original, more humanly sympathetic, — a power for the first time Norse. When they read how he stood and sang Norwegian melodies from his violin to other nations, we felt that they were one with us while they were moved to laughter and tears as they caught glimpses back of him of our people and grand, beautiful nature ; thus one may understand the



confidence, the faith, the pride he awakened, — he the foremost of all in our Norse independence. Henrik Wergeland expresses this when he makes Norway thus sing to Ole Bull : —

“ Oh, world-wide is my son’s fair fame !  
Anew my eye is proud aflame.

“ On, on, my son ! when thou art blest,  
’T is blessing in thy Mother’s breast.

“ A poet I, for ages long ;  
The Norsemen’s legends are my song.

“ My epic have I written too,  
A noble thought each hero true.”

On his first return from his triumphs abroad it was a festival but to look at him. When he played the folk-songs, which had been timidly hidden, though cherished in memory, now through him applauded by mighty rulers, that generation felt themselves borne to the same heights ; Ole Bull became the first and greatest festival in this people’s life ; he gave us self-respect, the greatest gift possible at that time.

This is Ole Bull’s undying honor, this the supreme accomplishment of his life.

If one would measure the depth of an impression, he must seek its expression in literature. Read Welhaven’s poem at that time to Ole Bull. Any man with a knowledge of European literature will not hesitate to say that it is one of the most beautiful lyrics ever written.

How happened it that he was the one to accomplish

all this? His birth of a musical race had not sufficed without the fervor of his patriotism. During our war for independence he was still a boy at play, and his childish voice was among the first to shout for our young freedom. When a youth — I speak whereof I know — his violin, with its boundless, exultant joy, sang our first national songs in Henrik Wergeland's college-room, and became the overture to Wergeland's inspiration of our national observance of the 17th of May. These feelings Ole Bull carried with him to other lands.

Patriotism was the creative power in his life. When he established the Norse theatre, assisted Norse art, helped the national museum, his mighty instrument singing for other patriotic ends; when he helped his countrymen and others wherever he found them, it was not so much for the object, or the person, but for the honor of Norway. He always felt himself our representative; and, if he felt there was need, let it be at home or abroad, that "Ole Olsen Viol, Norse Norman from Norway"<sup>1</sup> should appear, he never failed us.

His patriotism had a certain tinge of *naïveté*, of morbidity, about it; it was a consequence of the times. But it was of importance to us that our finest gentleman, coming from Europe's most cultured salons, could and would go arm in arm with our poor Norse beginnings. It lies in the nature of things that first attempts are never popular; they only become so when developed and recognized by all; but, as a rule, they have then outlived their usefulness.

It was this sturdy faithfulness in Ole Bull, spite of

<sup>1</sup> His own nickname for himself.

his impulsive temperament, that made him dear to our people ; in other words, it was his patriotism.

So it was with Henrik Wergeland. Ole Bull and Henrik Wergeland were of the same age and temperament. The one responded to the other as in the spring the wood-song answers the green of the meadows, or on the western coast the sea skerries and irregular mountain groups—the flickering sunshine on their grassy slopes, their shifting lights and shadows—answer the wooded ridges, the great, broad, rich landscape of the east, with Mjosen's gleaming surface in its midst. The one was the blue boy of the west, with the ocean's salt flavor, the restless spirit of the Vikings ; the other, the gray boy of the east.<sup>1</sup> There was western blood in Henrik Wergeland ; but his genius had the color of the mild, broad outlook of an eastern landscape, with the mountains in the distance.

When Ole Bull talked of his art, he was wont to say that he had learned to "sing" of the Italians. Without doubt this was true ; the outer form he had learned from them, but the genius and the colors were from the soul of our soul, the most spontaneous message of the folk-song, as love of country made it glow in his consciousness. An old, world-renowned artist<sup>2</sup> said to me : "Faults in Ole Bull's playing are more noticeable as he advances in age ; but no artist in our time has possessed Ole Bull's poetic power ; no one has ever surpassed his playing of the 'Adagio.' I think all his cultivated auditors will say the same."

<sup>1</sup> Gray and blue are the colors worn by the peasants in Norway.

<sup>2</sup> Joachim.



The criticism has been made that Ole Bull has failed in not leaving behind him great musical works. This is unjust. A man that could so fully give what he at times gave us could not do more. In proportion to the ability for the one, is the other impossible.

But it was important for us at that time, as it is always important for a small nation, that we had a man of the first rank among us. It was a direct connection with the outside world. It exalted our aims. As far as human power could, it spurred our ambition, — and that in all directions. Let us then, at the grave of our greatest citizen, say honor to him beyond all the artists who have broken a way for us, — he who not alone inspired followers in his profession, but also awakened ambition and happiness wherever he was known; helping the moral and intellectual forces, — the greatest legacy one can bequeath.

I love to remember him on the great 17th of May celebrations; for he was a celebration himself, majestic, fascinating, as he walked among us. And a gesture of his hand, a look, raised in him who received it a holiday mood.

Thus hand in hand with all our national development, ennobling it, cherishing in his love the least with the greatest, always ennobling, — this was his life, this his inspiration. Such a love of country rewards, as by miracle, him who cherishes it. When I read every year how he came home with summer, like the bird of passage, how he came this summer, and that his love of country, of home, bore him on, spite of distance, the advice of physicians, and all hindrances, I thought of

Henrik Wergeland's words of Robert Major: "First thence and then to heaven would the old gray republican." His eye would fondly rest on that land he loved before it closed in death.

Countrymen! let us not leave this spot till we have thanked her who did what a nation could not — opened to his age a home of beauty and comfort. . . .

Always before when we have spoken in Ole Bull's honor we have closed with a "Long live Ole Bull!" This we may never say again — though dead to us he is not, — he will be with us when we return to our homes. Let my last words be an appeal to the young here present. True to the dead one, as your elders who knew him, ye cannot be; but by this grave, mark the wonders worked by love of country, the miracle revealed forever in this rich life of which we solemnize the earthly close.

Again a hymn was sung, and Edward Grieg then said with emotion: —

Because more than any other thou wast the glory of our land, because more than any other thou hast carried our people with thee up towards the bright heights of art, because thou wast more than any other a pioneer of our young national music, more, much more, than any other the faithful, warm-hearted conqueror of all hearts, because thou hast planted a seed which shall spring up in the future and for which coming generations shall bless thee — with the gratitude of thousands upon thousands, for all this, in the name of our Norse memorial art, I lay this laurel wreath on thy coffin. Peace be with thy ashes!

Mr. Bendixen, on behalf of the National Theatre, said : —

With grateful remembrance that our great artist, ardently loving his native land, saw with clear, penetrating vision the influence of art on the development of a people, — especially of an independent dramatic art springing up in its midst, — with earnest and heartfelt thanks, because we owe to his inspiring energy and example the presence of that art in his own native city, recognizing that his name will be always connected with its history, — in the name of Bergen's National Theatre, I lay this wreath upon his grave.

“ After the coffin had been put in the grave, and the relatives had gone away, there was paid a last tribute to Ole Bull, — a tribute more touching and of more worth than the king's message, the gold crown, all the orders, and the flags of the world at half-mast, meaning more love than the pine-strewn streets of the silent city, and the tears on its people's faces ; a tribute from poor peasants, who had come in from the country far and near, men who knew Ole Bull's music by heart, — who, in their lonely, poverty-stricken huts had been proud of the man who had played their ‘ Gamle Norge ’ before the kings of the earth. These men were there by hundreds, each bringing a green bough, or a fern, or a flower ; they waited humbly till all others had left the grave,



then crowded up, and threw in, each man, the only token he had been rich enough to bring. The grave was filled to the brim. And it is not irreverent to say, that to Ole Bull, in heaven, there could come no gladder memory of earth than that the last honors paid him there were wild leaves and flowers of Norway, laid on his body by the loving hands of Norway peasants."

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"Now long that instrument has ceased to sound,  
Now long that gracious form in earth hath lain,  
Tended by nature only, and unwound  
Are all those mingled threads of love and pain ;  
So let us weep, and bend  
Our heads, and wait the end,  
Knowing that God creates not thus in vain."



## APPENDIX.





## APPENDIX.

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### THE ANATOMY OF THE VIOLINIST, MR. OLE BULL: HIS POSE AND METHOD OF HOLDING THE VIOLIN.

BY A. B. CROSBY, A. M., M. D.,

*Professor of Anatomy, Bellevue Hospital Medical College, New York, 1877.*

THIRTY-ONE years ago, in a quaint old Congregational church in a New England village, I first heard Mr. Ole Bull perform on the violin, and witnessed

“The matchless skill, the potent art that brings  
Voices of earth, or heaven, from those mute strings.”

I had never seen a violin save in the hands of a country dancing-master, and it was like a new revelation when this high-bred gentleman stood up “every inch a man,” and with “charmed touch” dignified his instrument.

During the past few weeks, both in public and private, I have had an opportunity to enjoy again the magic of the weird musician’s art, and I find that the boyish pleasure stands the test of manhood’s reflection. But in my later experience I have not only drank in my fill of the “dulcet creams” of music, but from the stand-point of an anatomist have attempted to unravel the secret of Mr. Bull’s graceful pose and unique method of holding the violin. Nor has my study been without results,

which I shall attempt to develop for the benefit of the ambitious violinist who would adopt the methods of a master.

The pose of Mr. Bull when playing is a model of manly grace. He rests his body centrally over the left leg as a firm column of support, while the right foot is advanced and the right leg forms an oblique brace. The pose is essentially the "rest" of the soldier, and combines the maximum of ease and stability.

The figure is singularly erect, nor does the head incline like that of the ordinary violinist—save only in certain inspired moments when for an instant the ear drops towards the well loved instrument as if to catch

"The still sad music of humanity"

inaudible to other ears. Both the head and chin are absolutely free and seem to feel no responsibility for the position of the violin. The bust, which has been superbly developed by a lifetime of musical gymnastics, measures on full inspiration forty-two inches, having an expansion of three inches. The waist, at twenty-four years of age, measured twenty-four inches; and although the years have increased, the waist measure remains exactly the same. Mr. Bull's height in his stocking-feet is five feet eleven and a quarter inches. As he stands before an audience waiting for his accompaniment, with his small waist, his superb bust, his finely cut face, and the carriage of a prince, he is the incarnation of the Magnus Apollo. But when his imperial bow grows liquid and pours out silvery notes like the music of many waters, we seem to see as in a dream that the wheel of Ixion stops, the stone of Sisyphus stands still, Tantalus forgets his perpetual thirst, and even the Furies relent. Then it is that we wake to



find that Apollo, as in the ancient myth, has yielded the lyre to Orpheus.

The excellence of Mr. Bull's method in holding the violin depends mainly on the admirable position of the left arm. The upper arm is carried forward and inward, the elbow being brought well in front of the



FIG. 1.

chest. The fore-arm is then flexed, thus forming a brace to support the neck of the instrument, while the same portion of the arm is in a position of extreme supination ; that is, the fore-arm is turned so that the palm is upward. It will thus be observed that the palm of the hand is placed higher than the clavicle or collar-bone, where the tail-piece of the violin rests (Fig. 1).

When the violin is placed in position, the tail-piece rests against the root of the neck, just above the clavicle or collar-bone, while the neck of the instrument reposes upon the palmar surface of the thumb throughout the whole or part of its extent, according to the exigencies of the fingering.

It will thus be seen that from the palm to the root of

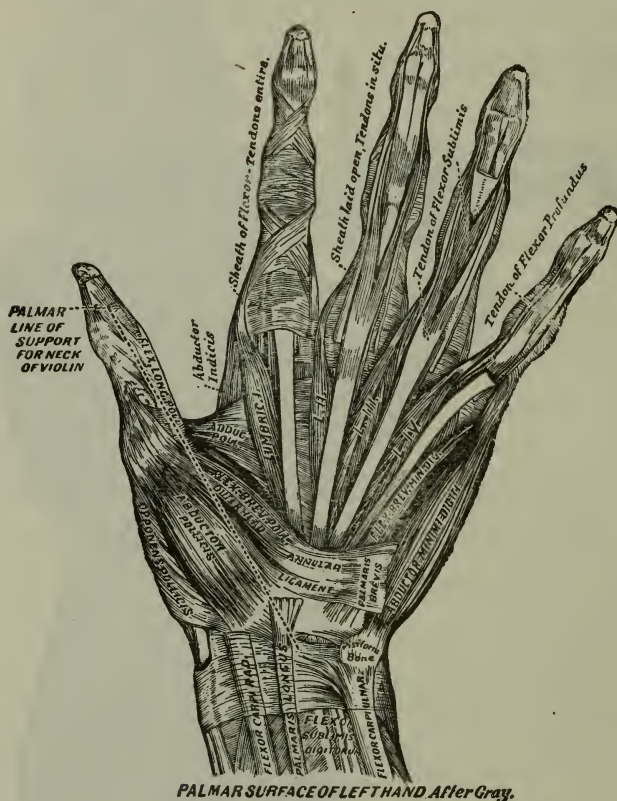


FIG. 2.

the neck the violin rests upon an inclined plane, gravitating towards the collar-bone (see Fig. 1). The instrument then is not *held*, but *rests* upon a friendly hand and neck.

From the fact that its position is maintained by the force of gravity, it follows that the chin need not grasp the base of the violin — since it holds itself — and the head is left free and erect.

Thus the old-time violinist's constrained head position is avoided.

The line of support along the palmar surface of the thumb is full of anatomical interest.

The accompanying diagram (Fig. 2) may serve to illustrate this and some other points. A black line will be seen extending along the whole length of the palmar surface of the thumb, crossing the base of the annular ligament to a point a little above the wrist. This is essentially the line of support for the neck and upper curves of the violin. It may be called a movable rest, swaying laterally, it is true, but only to a limited extent. The thumb is placed on a different plane from the rest of the fingers, and has motions essentially different from them. The power of perfect opposition to all the fingers by the thumb distinguishes man from the most intelligent of the lower animals.

Although the thumb possesses a cunning in movements far superior to the other fingers, yet in Mr. Bull's method the thumb, at any given instant, is the fixed point or rest for the upper part of the violin, while the fingers are left absolutely free and movable for the demands of fingering.

Referring again to Fig. 2, it will be seen that the muscles of the thumb, consisting of the *Opponens Pollicis*, *Abductor Pollicis*, *Flexor Brevis Pollicis*, *Flexor Longus Pollicis*, and *Adductor Pollicis*, are connected absolutely with the thumb, and in Mr. Bull's method they move it only sufficiently to constitute a movable rest.

The annular ligament consists of a dense, firm, white, fibrous band, attached to bony prominences on either side of the wrist, thus forming a strong membranous arch, which is capable of supporting the violin without



difficulty, while beneath and protected by it the long flexor tendons glide uninterruptedly, thus permitting absolutely free flexion of the fingers on the finger-board. Mr. Bull never grasps the neck of the instrument between the thumb and fingers, since this would at once put such constraint on the fingers as to prevent rapid and effective action on the finger-board.

In fine, the violin *rests* without restraint, like an obedient slave, on a couch formed for it by the arm of its imperial master.

Nothing is more observable in Mr. Bull's method than the peculiar obliquity of the finger-tips when applied to the strings. Some have claimed that the tips of the fingers when applied to the strings should be essentially at right angles to the finger-board. Mr. Bull discovered experimentally that such a method of fingering increased his nervous exhaustion, and gave him positive brain-fatigue, frequently after only moderate practice.

He therefore learned instinctively to give the fingers the pose seen in Fig. 1, which he claims diminishes perceptibly nervous exhaustion, at the same time that it insures to the fingers much greater freedom of flexion. By consulting the cut it will be observed that the finger-tips approach the finger-board with a marked obliquity, and that the points of pressure are not on the tips of the pulps of the fingers, but on their radial or thumb side near the angle of the nails. If we examine the end of the finger we shall observe a series of curved lines or ridges, which are made up of "*papillæ tactûs*," or points of touch, having a linear arrangement and acute sensibility. These ridges are broader and better developed over the tips of the pulps of the fingers than on the sides.

It follows that the sensibility, most acute at the tips, gradually diminishes as we approach the sides. Moreover the epidermis, or scarf-skin, gradually increases in thickness as we approach the angle of the nails; hence the "point of election" with Mr. Bull in making pressure on the strings is best adapted for the purpose, since the points of touch are less sensitive, and their sensibility is still farther diminished by an increased thickness of the epidermic covering. In this matter, then, it would seem that Mr. Bull has anatomical "justification" for the faith that is in him.

I was anxious to determine as far as possible the points of contact between the "line of support" on the thumb and the violin, when the fingers were at different points on the finger-board. It was a matter of no little difficulty, since, as before observed, the thumb while playing constitutes a movable rest, and glides with infinite ease and grace from the head to the body of the instrument. Nor could the distinguished gentleman himself afford me much assistance. The habit of a lifetime had become a second nature; it could be done easily and gracefully, but it was difficult to do it and analyze it at the same time. Nay more, the very attempt threatened to throw us into confusion worse confounded. The problem was at length solved in this wise. Standing behind the musician, I requested him to entirely ignore me and my object, and to play some of his most impassioned pieces, "the world forgetting and by the world forgot." Dividing the finger-board into four equal segments, I watched the play of the left hand up and down the violin, and noted the positions assumed by the thumb at different points.

By noting the points of contact and support when the index and middle fingers pressed the strings at the up-

per part of each fourth, I was enabled to establish four definite positions. It should be noted that this division of the finger-board into fourths is not musical but purely arbitrary, in order to establish the pose of the violin on the thumb when the hand is at different points along the instrument. Thus we might hope to get an approxi-



FIG. 3.

mate idea of the way in which the one position easily glides into the next. The accompanying cuts may serve to illustrate the four positions. Fig. 1, already several times referred to, shows the first position. The index and middle fingers press the string at the lower part of the first fourth of the finger-board. The neck of the instrument rests along the whole length of the palmar line on the thumb, as represented in Fig. 2. The



curve at the upper part of the body of the violin marked A (Fig. 1) is seen to rest against the wrist. This is rarely the case when Mr. Bull is playing ; but it became necessary as a rest during the horrors of photographing.

It is perhaps unnecessary to again call attention to the fact that the violin rests on an inclined plane, its

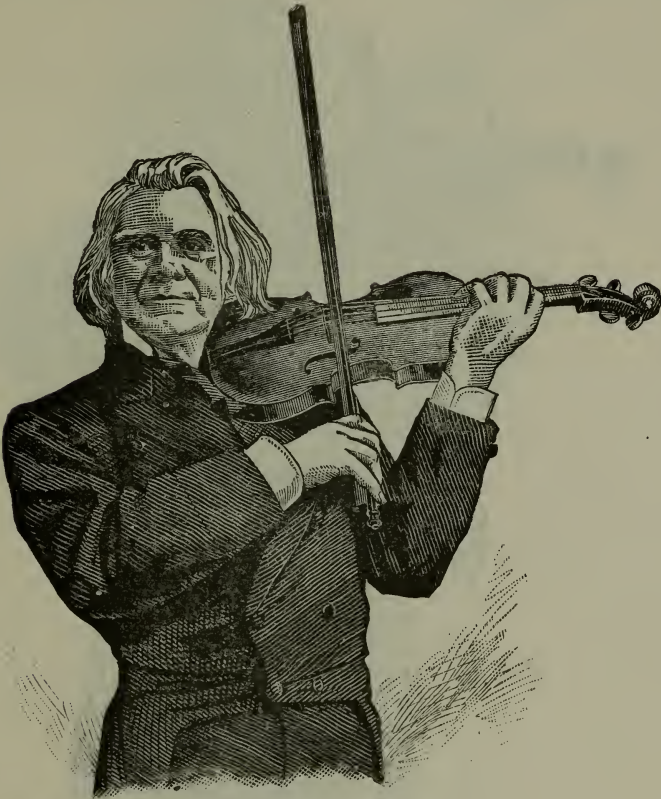


FIG. 4.

position being almost entirely maintained by its own gravity.

Fig. 3 shows the second position. It will be seen that the pose of the arm is essentially the same, but the thumb has glided up the neck of the violin until the index finger rests at the lower extremity of the second fourth of the finger-board. The neck of the instrument rests on the anterior extremity of the thumb line,

while the curve marked B (Fig. 3) rests upon the annular ligament (for which see Fig. 2). Fig. 4 simply shows the reverse of the position shown in Fig. 3. Fig. 5 represents the third position. The index finger rests at the beginning of the third fourth of the fin-



FIG. 5.

ger-board. The anterior extremity of the thumb line supports the base of the neck adjoining the "shield," while the curve marked C rests against the base of the thumb and annular ligament.

Fig. 6 shows the fourth position. The index finger here rests at the commencement of the last fourth of

the finger-board. The anterior extremity of the thumb line presses against the base of the neck adjoining the "shield." When Mr. Clay reached the highest flights of his eloquence, one of his admirers in the Senate



FIG. 6.

said that he looked "forty feet high." Mr. Bull, who has been thought to resemble the great statesman in personal appearance, makes somewhat the same impression on the spectator when he reaches his highest notes. Involving, as these notes do, fingering in the



highest fourth of the board, it becomes necessary for the musician to elevate the whole instrument, since it is simply steadied against the neck by the thumb, as may be seen in the cut ; and by the time the highest note is reached, the grand proportions of the Viking



FIG. 7.

have towered to their utmost height. To one who has seen Mr. Bull at such a time this will not, I am sure, seem an exaggeration.

The last diagram (Fig. 7) is appended simply to show the reverse of Fig. 6.

It is a well known fact that playing on the violin

develops the muscles of the arms and chest to a most remarkable extent. It is a matter of some interest to inquire what effect, in the case of Mr. Bull, a lifelong practice on the instrument has had. I append the subjoined measurements which I took from this gentleman.

The chest measure over nipples was forty-two inches on full inspiration. On forced expiration the measurement was thirty-nine inches. The measurement from the middle of the top of breast-bone to tip of shoulder was the same on both sides, namely, ten inches. It is well known that there is a normal difference between the right and left sides of the body.

NOTE. — As Dr. Crosby's paper is unfinished, we append to it a letter from the celebrated Tartini, which was translated and published by Dr. Burney in 1779, as "an important lesson to performers on the violin."

When Ole Bull was once speaking of his experiences in Italy, in 1834, he said: "I tried, if possible, to hear some player of the old Italian school. I happened to come in contact with an old man of ninety years, a pupil — amateur pupil, I will add — of Tartini. I paid him my respects, and asked to see his violin and hear him play, as it was my intention to study the Italian method. With infinite grace he took up an old Amati violin, the sight of which made my eyes water, and putting the bow on the strings, he produced tones which were an exact reproduction of the Tartini method as published by that great master in a letter which was shown me. Ah! so different from the modern school! Why, the violinist of to-day serves his instrument as though it were a slave, and must be driven to duty with the lash. The player should treat his violin as a tender child — fondle and caress it, not beat it. The beauty of a performance lies in exacting from the instrument tones corresponding with the deep love a true artist feels for his art."

The letter referred to by Ole Bull was the one translated by Dr. Burney, which reads as follows : —

PADUA, *March 5, 1760.*

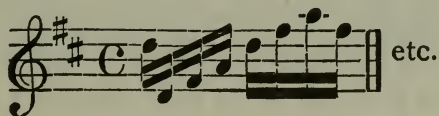
MY VERY MUCH ESTEEMED SIGNORA MADDALENA, — Finding myself at length disengaged from the weighty business which has so long prevented me from performing my promise to you, a promise which was made with too much sincerity for my want of punctuality not to afflict me, I shall begin the instructions you wish from me by letter ; and if I should not explain myself with sufficient clearness, I entreat you to tell me your doubts and difficulties in writing, which I shall not fail to remove in a future letter.

Your principal practice and study should, at present, be confined to the use and power of the bow, in order to make yourself entirely mistress in the execution and expression of whatever can be played or sung, within the compass and ability of your instrument. Your first study, therefore, should be the true manner of holding, balancing, and pressing the bow lightly, but steadily, upon the strings ; in such a manner as it shall seem to breathe the first tone it gives, which must proceed from the friction of the string, and not from percussion, as by a blow given with a hammer upon it. This depends on laying the bow lightly upon the strings at the first contact, and on gently pressing it afterwards, which, if done gradually, can scarcely have too much force given to it, because, if the tone is begun with delicacy, there is little danger of rendering it afterwards either coarse or harsh.

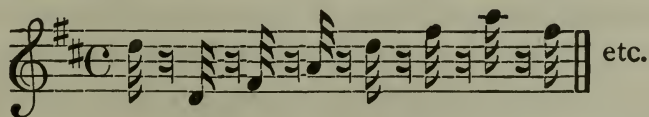
Of this first contact and delicate manner of beginning a tone you should make yourself a perfect mistress in every situation and part of the bow, as well in the middle as at the extremities ; and in moving it up as well as in drawing it down. To unite all these laborious particulars into one lesson, my advice is, that you first exercise yourself in a swell upon an open string, for example, upon the second string ; that you begin *pianissimo*, and increase the tone by slow de-



grees to its *fortissimo* ; and this study should be equally made with the motion of the bow up and down, in which exercise you should spend at least an hour every day, though at different times, a little in the morning and a little in the evening ; having constantly in mind that this is, of all things, the most difficult and the most essential to playing well on the violin. When you are a perfect mistress of this part of a good performer, a swell will be very easy to you ; beginning with the most minute softness, increasing the tone to its loudest degree, and diminishing it to the same point of softness with which you began, and all this in the same stroke of the bow. Every degree of pressure upon the string which the expression of a note or passage shall require will by this means be easy and certain ; and you will be able to execute with your bow whatever you please. After this, in order to acquire that light pulsation and play of the wrist, from whence velocity in bowing arises, it will be best for you to practice every day one of the *Allegros*, of which there are three in Corelli's solos, which entirely move in semiquavers. The first is in D, in playing which you should accelerate the motion a little each time, till you arrive at the quickest degree of swiftness possible ; but two precautions are necessary in this exercise : the first is, that you play the notes *staccato*, that is, separate and detached, with a little space between every two, for though they are written thus —

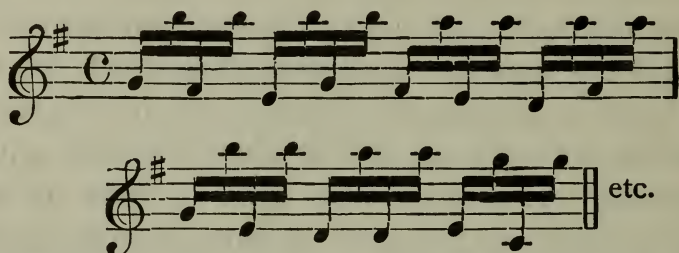


they should be played as if there was a rest after every note, in this manner —



The second precaution is, that you first play with the point of the bow ; and when that becomes easy to you, that you use that part of it which is between the point and the middle ;

and when you are likewise mistress of this part of the bow, that you practice in the same manner with the middle of the bow ; and above all, you must remember in these studies to begin the *Allegros* or flights sometimes with an up-bow, and sometimes with a down-bow, carefully avoiding the habit of constantly practicing one way. In order to acquire a greater facility of executing swift passages in a light and neat manner, it will be of great use to you if you accustom yourself to skip over a string between two quick notes in divisions, like these —

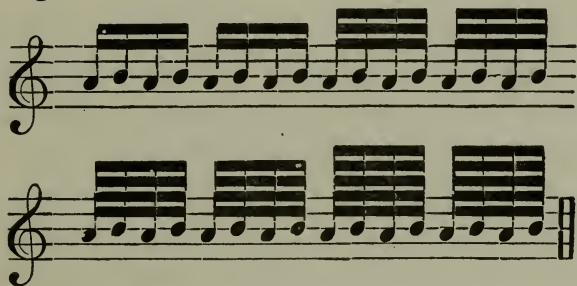


Of such divisions you may play extempore as many as possible, and in every key, which will be both useful and necessary.

With regard to the finger-board, or carriage of the left hand, I have one thing strongly to recommend to you, which will suffice for all ; and that is, the taking a violin part, either the first or second of a concerto, sonata, or song, anything will serve the purpose, and playing it upon the half-shift, that is, with the first finger upon G on the first string, and constantly keeping upon this shift, playing the whole piece without moving the hand from this situation, unless A on the fourth string be wanted, or D upon the first ; but in that case, you should afterwards return again to the half-shift, without ever moving the hand down to the natural position. This practice should be continued till you can execute with facility upon the half-shift any violin part not intended as a solo, at sight. After this advance the hand on the finger-board to the whole-shift, with the first finger upon A on the first string, and accustom yourself to this position till you can execute everything upon the whole-shift with as much ease as when

the hand is in its natural situation ; and when certain of this, advance to the double-shift, with the first finger upon B, on the first string ; and when sure of that likewise, pass to the fourth position of the hand, making C with the first finger upon the first string ; and indeed this is a scale in which, when you are firm, you may be said to be mistress of the finger-board This study is so necessary, that I most earnestly recommend it to your attention.

I now pass to the third essential part of a good performer on the violin, which is the making of a good shake, and I would have you practice it slow, moderately fast, and quick, that is, with the two notes succeeding each other in these three degrees of *adagio*, *andante*, and *presto* ; and in practice you have great occasion for these different kinds of shakes, for the same shake will not serve with equal propriety for a slow movement as for a quick one ; but to acquire both at once with the same trouble, begin with an open string, either the first or second, it will be equally useful ; sustain the note in a swell, and begin the shake very slow, increasing in quickness, by insensible degrees, till it becomes rapid, in the manner following : —



But you must not vigorously move immediately from semi-quavers to demi-semiquavers, as in this example, or from these to the next in degree — that would be doubling the velocity of the shake all at once, which would be a skip, not a graduation ; but you can imagine between a semiquaver and a demi-semiquaver intermediate degrees of rapidity, quicker than the one, and slower than the other of these characters ; you are therefore to increase in velocity by the same degrees in prac-



ting the shake, as in loudness when you make a swell. You must attentively and assiduously persevere in the practice of this embellishment, and begin at first with an open string, upon which if you are once able to make a good shake with the first finger, you will with the greater facility acquire one with the second, the third, and the fourth, or little finger, with which you must practice in a particular manner, as more feeble than the rest of its brethren. I shall, at present, propose no other studies to your application ; what I have already said is more than sufficient, if your zeal is equal to my wishes, for your improvement. I hope you will sincerely inform me whether I have explained myself clearly thus far ; that you will accept of my respects, which I likewise beg of you to present to the Prioress, to Signora Teresa, and to Signora Chiara, for all whom I have a sincere regard ; and believe me to be, with great affection,

Your obedient and most humble servant,

GIUSEPPE TARTINI.

## VIOLIN NOTES.

BY OLE BULL.

## PREFACE.

OLE BULL had long contemplated revising and filling out his fragmentary notes on the violin and its construction, jotted down at various times. Excepting some slight rearrangement they are now presented as he left them, unfinished and incomplete. As they stand they are genuine and characteristic, and doubtless indicate part of the general design he was not permitted to complete.

Aided by peculiar physical and nervous force Ole Bull presented that rare combination, — excellence in the *technique* of the left hand, with equal excellence in that of the bow. No difficulty in the fingering of double, treble, and quadruple tones seemed to exist for him. The fact that the violin is not best calculated for the powerful demands of a four-part passage, and that, therefore, the effect in a large hall is apt to be hazy and indistinct, should in no way detract from the wonderful skill required for its performance. In executing a trill he showed no partiality for a particular finger: the pulsation was always even and clear. His scales were extremely smooth, both in ascending and descending. He excelled in executing whole passages in any fixed position, also in rapid shifting from a low position to a high one and *vice versâ*, and in pizzicato with the left hand. In the management of the bow he was unrivaled. His staccato was peculiar to himself, and was simply perfection. Whether the bow was impelled in a succession of little rippling bounds or of detached *martelé* strokes, each note possessed wonderful distinctness and

impetus. In the arpeggio the notes were never slurred together, and the double accentuation of the lowest and highest notes imparted a full rhythmic swing to such passages. The tremolo and *sautillé* displayed the delicate flexibility of his wrist. His tone was pure, elastic, and sympathetic.

In his compositions the various motives are always well worked out, and abound in broad and beautiful effects. As they were written for himself, they exemplify his peculiarities of fingering and bowing. Like Paganini's, they are almost unplayable; for, apart from the difficulties of *technique*, without the *vis viva* of the master they lack their greatest charm.

To his remarkable personal magnetism was added a grace and dignity of appearance, an unvarying amiability and courtesy of manner. He met few whose feelings towards him, however antagonistic at first, did not speedily become warm and friendly, and little children loved him.

WALTER E. COLTON.

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE VIOLIN.

The country which affords us the most ancient memorials of a perfect language, of an advanced civilization, of a philosophy in which all phases of human thought find expression, of a poetry rich in every style, and of a musical art corresponding with the lively susceptibilities of the people — India — appears to have given birth to bow instruments.

Classical antiquity, in its forms of sculpture and bas-relief, contains no suggestion of the instrument. A little figure of Apollo playing upon a kind of violin with something like a bow, exhibited in Florence, has been proved to be of modern production. This is the only known piece of sculpture reputed ancient, in which anything like a bow can be found. Ancient painting, while giving many delineations of musical instruments, in



every case fails to represent that indispensable adjunct of the violin proper, — the bow.

As to India, no conjecture based on obscure interpretation of record or delineation is needed, for the veritable instruments exist to-day, preserving, in the main, their original characteristics. The first or simplest form of bow instrument seems to have consisted of a little hollow cylinder of wood covered at one end with a piece of skin tightly stretched, and furnished with a neck and bridge, the whole being very much like a modern banjo. A slip of bamboo, bent so as to hold tense a bundle of hairs, furnished the bow. The number of strings was variable, according to the purpose of the instrument. Thus, in the case of the virtuoso, one string was deemed sufficient, while for the uses of the common people two or three were permitted. The antiquity claimed by Indian writers for this form of bow instrument is almost incredible; one tradition relates that it was invented by one of the early kings of Ceylon, at a period about five thousand years before the Christian era. In that dawn of history the migratory tides flowing from the East to the West, from India through Asia, Persia, Arabia, thence through northern Europe, and thence across the Danube and the Rhine, have left other memorials than the stormy history of their wars. The polite arts of to-day find their crude germs in that ancient time. And although, by the ready interchange of ideas achieved by modern civilization, a modern invention may embody suggestions gathered from all countries and all times, it is possible to examine each component part, to follow up each relative train of thought which has here found practical expression, until we arrive at the single idea, the main-spring,

as it were, of the whole mechanism. In music the violin may be traced back through a thousand varied forms until it finds its beginning in the *revanastron*, or, as I have called it, the banjo-fiddle of India. At the time of its invention, it was undoubtedly designed for nothing higher than an accompaniment to the voice. As such it exists to-day in parts of India and Arabia, and in such menial capacity it was retained until about the 12th century. In fact, bow instruments did not come into special notice in Europe until about the 13th or 14th century.

At that time the natural divisions of the human voice, long recognized, were definitely classed into soprano, tenor, alto, and bass; and music began to be considered in the true dignity of its position as an art to be scientifically cultivated. With the scientific division of the voice, bow instruments became at once similarly divided into their four registers. The form of instruments was still arbitrary; the number of strings and manner of tuning varied with every new caprice; but the instrumental combinations of that day contained the nucleus of the modern quartette.

Still, despite the progressive steps and more popular diffusion of musical knowledge, the instruments of the violin family at that time, and for a period of nearly two centuries, held but a precarious tenure of existence in the rivalry with the more robust fellow-members of the orchestra; for the musical susceptibilities of the people appear to have been more cordially appealed to and drawn out by the sonorous blasts of the brazen trumpet and the artillery of the kettle-drum, than by the sweet and subdued tones of the bow instruments of the day.

It is related that King Henry the Eighth of England,

in the year 1530, was entertained at Cardinal Wolsey's palace with "a concert of drums and fifes." This is nothing compared with the heroic endurance of his daughter Elizabeth, who was "daily regaled during dinner with twelve trumpets, two kettle-drums, which, together with fifes, cornets, and side-drums, made the hall ring for half an hour together."

Between the latter part of the 15th century and the first half of the 16th, the instruments of the viol family, with the introduction of the *viol d'amour* and the *viol di gamba*, reached the terminus of their servitude as appendages to the voice, and at one step culminated in the invention of the violin as we have it to-day. The new curvatures of the top and back; the deep indentures of the sides for convenience of the bow; the sweep of the outline; the scroll; the removal of the frets on the finger-board, — an ancient distinguishing feature, perpetuated in the arrangement of the neck of the guitar, — all these innovations upon established conventionality seem to have been made at once. Since that time the violin has steadily, and without retrogression, advanced to its present position in popular estimation, — the aristocrat of musical instruments. Laboring under difficulties not encountered by the voice, it is yet capable of presenting a rhythmic musical picture, which the mind can take up and at once translate to the feelings in intelligible language.

#### GASPAR DA SALO AND THE CREMONA SCHOOL.

The form of the violin varied with the epoch in which it was used. The lifetime of Tartini (born A. D. 1692, died A. D. 1770) marks the period during which the powers of the violin in all varieties and styles were



completely developed. The violin-makers had to adapt their instruments to the wants of the performers. The efforts of Stradivarius and Guarnerius contributed in a marked degree to assist Tartini in creating a new era for the violin. The best epoch of Stradivarius was from 1700 to 1720 or 1725. It was during Tartini's lifetime that considerable rise in the pitch took place. This, in the violin, necessitated a new arrangement to withstand the greater strain. The instrument kept pace with the new demands made upon it. In consequence of the increased powers of the general orchestra, the old delicate sweetness of the *Amatis* ceased to be the chief desideratum, a more masculine and heroic tone gaining the preference. This quality of tone reached its climax in Joseph Guarnerius.

When Francis I. was in Rome and heard the choir of the Vatican Chapel, he was so charmed with the violin, that he induced the luter Gaspar Duiffoprugcar, also, as I believe, called *Da Salo*<sup>1</sup> after his native town on Lake Garda, to accompany him to Paris, there to make violins, violas, and contrabasses for his court. It is known of Gaspar's history that he was quite unable to endure the climate of Paris, and therefore removed to Lyons; so that his instruments date from three places, — Brescia, Paris, and Lyons.

His instruments, at least those made during his life in Italy, are for the most part roughly constructed. His varnish is of a brownish yellow color, exceedingly fine

<sup>1</sup> Ole Bull was almost convinced that Duiffoprugcar and *Da Salo* were names of one man, and thought the Brescian labels bearing the late date of 1610 spurious. This doubtful point, which he could not wholly clear up, is given because he accepted although he could not prove it.

and soft. The thickness of wood in the top and back is so adjusted as to give to the tone quality, power, and solidity, and great variety of color. Da Salo violins of any of his periods are very rare.

The viol in Raphael's "Parnassus," where Apollo is represented as playing it, was introduced in honor of the then admired *improvisatore* and violist Giacomo Sansecolo, who had inspired in Raphael so great an admiration for the viol that he considered it worthy of being placed in the hands of the god of song. In Giacomo Sansecolo's time the violin had been already introduced, and he was doubtless able to play that instrument. As Gaspar da Salo was then living, it is probable that the viol in the picture was drawn from a model supplied by him. In the first changes from the form of the viol to that of the violin, the new offshoot retained many of the peculiarities of its older kindred, notably in the broad, full oval of the back and top, and the pointed *f* holes.

The violins of Gaspar da Salo and Joseph Guarnerius have the sound of a trumpet, horn, or flute; those of Stradivarius have the sound of the oboe and clarinet; and those of the Amati family, of the English horn and the human voice. The Steiner violins have the greatest diversity of color between the upper and lower strings, and resemble a sharp oboe. The violins of Maggini are grand but somewhat hollow in tone, inclining to the viola; this quality is due to their curves and large proportions.

Andrew Amati, the earliest of the Cremonese makers, is supposed to have learned the principles of his art in the Brescian school. He made violins for the courts of France, Italy, and Spain; and these instruments were

often ornamented by gilding or painting — covered with devices in gold, Latin adages, and in some instances the coats of arms of the different courts for which they were made. His violins are all of high model. His workmanship in all the details of outline, swells, *f* holes, scroll, etc. is exceedingly fine. They have enough wood at the centre of the top and back, but are rather thin at the extremities. The tone is sweet and vocal, but sometimes inferior on the G and D strings. He discarded the serious cathedral style of Da Salo and Maggini, together with the broad, thick, and strong extremities of their instruments ; and it must be said that his narrow, hollow, rounded, thin violins were admirably adapted to their purpose ; the sweet and subdued tone harmonizing with that of the *viol d'amour* and its kindred in the interpretation of the ballad music of the royal chambers.

Antonius and Hieronymus Amati, the two sons of Andrew, at first worked together in the style of their father, but later they adopted a model somewhat flatter at the edges. These violins combine great beauty of form with superior wood, and have a fine and brilliant though delicate tone. After some years the brothers ceased working together.

I have seen several violins of Antonius Amati. They were all of rather high model. The wood of the back and sides was frequently of pear-tree, but they were made quite strong in wood, and therefore possessed a rather strong tone, particularly on the G string.

The violins of Hieronymus Amati are of larger pattern and flatter model than those of his brother, but are not so finely finished. Their tone, however, is much finer.



Nicholas Amati, son of Hieronymus, was the most celebrated maker of the family. In his large instruments he flattened the model somewhat, carving it sometimes, however, rather abruptly to a ridge in the centre, and making the curve an inch from the edges all around slightly concave. His workmanship was always most careful, and his finish exquisite. In these respects, he has never been excelled by any of the Italian makers. The tone, while often sufficiently powerful, lacks the breadth of the Gaspar da Salo, or Joseph Guarnerius. The varnish is generally yellow, and somewhat thin in body. Of all the Amati family, Andrew had the best varnish, it being more intense and rich in color and having greater body than that used by his sons.

Antonius Stradivarius was a pupil of the Amatis. His life has been divided into three periods, — his pupilage, his emancipation from the old rules, or artistic period, and his old age. He made a great many violins. He originated a new outline, flattened the model, did away with the excessive gutter or hollowing out at the edges, and selected his wood with regard to beauty as well as quality. His violins of the second period are marvels of neat, attentive workmanship. The varnish has a beautiful warmth of color, and great flexibility. But although the tone is wonderfully even and full, it is tintured with a peculiar nasal quality. For this reason, though I have owned several fine specimens of this maker, among them one of a quartette made for the court of Spain, I have never played on them in public.

Of the Guarnerius family, I shall only mention Joseph, the nephew of Andrew. Rejecting the new form of Stradivarius and the older traditions of the

Amatis, he seems to have chosen Gaspar da Salo and Maggini for his models ; but his violins, while combining the peculiarities of these two makers, preserve the stamp of his own genius. The salient points of the Brescian school are noticed in the pointed *f* holes, the sweep of the outline, and the curve of the back. His violins are generally flat in model. The workmanship in its minute details is not always careful. The purfling is irregular, the edges not well finished, the outline awry, the *f* holes irregular, and the scrolls show the marks of the chisel ; but all is thoroughly characteristic. The varnish is of every color, — yellow, red, and brown, and generally of fine intensity of color and great body. The tone, like that of Da Salo, is full and masculine. Those instruments which were produced during one not very long period of his life are by far his best ; those made at other times are inferior, and in some cases almost unrecognizable as his productions. Possessing more genius than Stradivarius, he wasted his abilities, and rumor asserts that he led a life of idleness and dissipation, broken only, under pressure of want, by fitful periods of industry.

#### MY CONCERT GASPAR DA SALO.<sup>1</sup>

Once after a rehearsal in Breslau, in the year 1862, an old amateur and esteemed friend, Amtmann Zoller, who had purchased a collection of violins, wished me to look at them. I went, in company with a violin-maker, and saw the collection. The instruments were very fine, but I said, "The pearl of all is this Gaspar da Salo." The Amtmann answered, "I think so myself,

<sup>1</sup> These descriptions were given one day at the request of a friend.

and I am much pleased to find you agree with me. But the connoisseurs here are unwilling to see any special merit in the instrument, and if it should be sold I do not think it would bring so much as some of the others." When we left his house, — we had breakfasted with him, — the violin-maker said, "Why did you praise that violin so highly? You surely did not think that a superior instrument?" He then asked me why I did not offer to buy it. I said I could not think of offending the Amtmann by offering to purchase, for I did not suppose the violin was for sale. I consented, however, that he should ask him. The following morning he came to me, saying he had been to the Amtmann, who wished to see me. At our interview, in answer to his question whether I thought the instrument would entirely suit me, I assured him that it was a violin the tone of which could be graded in all different colors, and that I was in love with it. He then offered it to me at the price he paid for it (800 thalers); an offer I immediately accepted. A German musician, Lansberg by name, had been living in Rome for some twenty years, and had there made a collection of ancient violins. At his death, these were sent to his home in Breslau. The Amtmann Zoller purchased about a dozen of them, and among these was the Gaspar da Salo. Since I purchased this violin I have used it in all my public concerts.

I have another violin by a maker contemporaneous with Gaspar da Salo — in all probability Matteo Bente, Brescia, 1580. It very much resembles my concert violin in the model and *f* holes. I received it in Rome in 1835, from the librarian of the Vatican, Michael Angelo Lanzi. During my stay in Rome I had given



some lessons to a boy who was a favorite of his, and who had some talent for playing. As a return, he presented me this violin from the Vatican. In the Vatican vocal music only was given, and formerly violins and basses and violas were used in training the choir-boys. Of late years, this method falling out of use, the instruments gradually found their way into the hands of performers. I have not used this violin in concerts. It has a very peculiar flute-like tone, not capable of great variety of expression, but always in the whole range or compass preserving the same character. Nor is it capable of filling a large hall. The small turns of the *f* holes are very near together, the large ones correspondingly far apart. This nearness of the upper turns necessitates a narrow bridge, which interferes with the development of a great tone. It is evidently specially adapted for playing in company with flutes, guitars, mandolins, and other soft-toned instruments.

MY NICHOLAS AMATI.

I purchased this instrument in London in the year 1861. It had belonged to Sir W. Curtis, a director of the East India Company.

There is an anecdote of George the Fourth, that, as he played the violoncello, and wanted a quartette by Amati, and of course of the best, he applied to Sir W. Curtis, who sometimes played with him, and was financially his creditor in large sums. On the king's inquiring if he would sell his violin, he replied that his majesty could not afford to buy it, as he did not wish to see him sink deeper in debt. From Sir W. Curtis the violin passed into the hands of a Mr. Oliphant, also an East India director. I purchased it from his son. Mr.

Plowden, of London, a violin collector of great judgment, was much annoyed on finding I had become the owner of the violin. He pronounced it the finest specimen of Nicholas Amati in the world, and declared that he had waited forty years for the chance of being its possessor. He further offered in its place the choice of any two violins from his collection.

#### THE BRIDGE.

The position of the bridge should be such as to affect the whole violin equally, and not to favor one tone more than another. The centre of the bridge should be always directly over the centre line of the top. Whether it should stand slightly backwards or forwards of, or directly on a line drawn across the top from the inner notches of the *f* holes, will depend upon the character of the instrument, and can only be determined experimentally. It should incline toward the tail-piece in order to better withstand the forward pull of the strings in tuning.

The construction of the bridge has great influence upon the tone. Thinness of the centre of the bridge tends to make prominent any nasal quality or shrillness latent in the instrument. A proper solidity conveys sweetness and compactness, but too great thickness muffles the tone.

High-built violins mostly require low bridges, and such should be particularly thick at the edges where the strings rest.

The bridge should be perfectly flat on the side toward the tail-piece. It may be slightly convex on the other side.

The material of which the bridge is made should be

invariably maple. That which is known as the silver-gray maple is preferable to the brown or yellow, as having a more close and elastic grain.

The incisions in the sides of the bridge should extend each one third of the distance toward the centre. The French model of Aubert of Mirecourt, though open to some objections in special cases, is one of the best. These bridges are made of excellent wood, and are thick and strong.

The top of the bridge should be thick. Properly constructed, a bridge may be made quite heavy, and so made it will always convey a rounder and fuller volume of tone. The distance measured along the top, between the G and the E strings, should be  $1\frac{1}{3}\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The G string should be  $\frac{8}{3}\frac{1}{2}$  of an inch above the finger-board at its larger extremity; the E string,  $\frac{5}{3}\frac{1}{2}$  of an inch. The average height of the feet of the bridge should be about  $\frac{3}{8}$  of an inch. The thickness at the base, a scant  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch; at the top, a full  $\frac{1}{8}$  of an inch. The feet should be  $\frac{7}{8}$  of an inch long.

#### THE SOUND-POST.

In general, the sound-post should stand from  $\frac{1}{8}$  to  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch to the rear of the right foot of the bridge. Its outer edge should be in line with the outer edge of the foot. From this position its upper or lower end, or both, may be moved with advantage to secure certain qualities of tone. It should in all cases fit the curves of the top and back absolutely. Moving the lower end toward the centre favors the lower strings. If the lower strings are weak and the upper at all sharp or hard in tone, then a very loose post should be used. If the reverse is the case, a long and tightly fitting sound-post is



required. Moving the upper end outward will help all the strings, if the tone before was hard and shrill ; but if the upper strings happen to be dull and heavy, then the post should stand a little inside the line of the foot of the bridge, and a little further back. The sound-post should be made of fine-grained soft spruce. The grain should cross that of the top, as this will prevent the marring of the inner surface of the top in putting the post in and adjusting it.

#### THE BOW.

I use a bow longer by two inches than the ordinary standard. A powerful, heavy bow is required for four-string passages and many *tours de force*. The bow, while elastic, should be extremely stiff, so that if dropped upon the strings the rebounds are very rapid. It should have weight to give force to these rebounds, as in many passages the weight of the hand cannot be applied to assist the bow ; as in the tremolo, arpeggio, and staccato volante. In this last example the bow is thrown upon the strings and runs its length in a series of little rebounds, neither the fingers nor wrist having anything to do with the result. In order to graduate, as it were, the different colors of sound, we favor certain overtones by causing the hair to act at greater or less distances from the bridge. The nearer we approach the bridge the more the upper overtones, and the nearer the neck the more the lower overtones will be favored. In the first instance, the resulting tone resembles that of the trumpet ; and in the second, that of the horn and clarinet. With a heavy bow, in forte passages, only slight assistance is needed from the hand. The wrist is not cramped or stiffened in producing the

pressure. In piano passages, the little finger should partially sustain the weight, and the stick should be inclined toward the neck, so that only part of the hairs act upon the strings.

The great stiffness and elasticity of the heavy bow gives a freer, clearer tone than can be produced by one of a lighter and more sluggish nature.

The length of the bow is two feet, six inches; the length of the hair two feet, four inches. The number of hairs is about one hundred and sixty. Half of the hairs are put in one way, the other half the other. It is known that the hairs, as seen when magnified, have little sawlike teeth running in one direction. By thus dividing the hairs, they present the same friction on either the up or down stroke. The best hair is from Normandy. It should be round and even, and not flat in places.

#### THE BAR.

The principal object of the bar is to resist the pressure of the strings upon the top. All old violins require to be rebarred, owing to the height of the present musical pitch over that of one hundred years ago. The old short bars are no longer adapted to the greater strain, and more powerful ones are needed. From long continued strain, the pulling of the two extremes toward the centre, and the downward pressure of the bridge at that point, the tops of many old violins have bulged up at the ends and sunk down in the centre. The adjustment of a new bar will have a tendency to remedy this. As the bar was originally placed by Gaspar da Salo, so it should be placed now; that is, not in the direction of the fibres of the top, but obliquely, the end under the finger-board being nearest the centre.

In this position it appears to give ample support to the bridge and to allow a fuller and richer tone.<sup>1</sup>

#### THE VARNISH.

In a search after an elucidation of this so-called lost art, three facts immediately present themselves: first, this varnish was employed by the very earliest of the Italian makers as well as the later; second, its use was common only in Italy; third, it ceased to be applied to violins after A. D. 1750–1760.

In texture this varnish is extremely supple; it will yield to pressure, but breaks or scales off under a sudden blow. It is entirely transparent, and of all shades of brown, red, and yellow. The vehicle in which the gums and colors are dissolved is an oil. Applied to a violin, it compacts the tone together, without rendering it shrill or harsh, and gives additional beauty to the wood. That its ingredients were indigenous to the Italian soil is out of the question. It is well known that much of the maple used by the violin-makers of that day came from Turkey. Imported to Venice, it was employed in the construction of oars, etc. The extremely curly pieces, owing to their liability to fracture under rough usage, were consequently rejected, to be appropriated by the violin-makers. Venice and Genoa held great command over the entire Eastern trade, and undoubtedly through these ports came the various gums and coloring substances of which this varnish was made.

Turning to other countries of Europe — Germany, France, and England — and examining the productions of their most celebrated violin-makers contemporaneous with the Cremonese school, scarcely a trace of the Ital-

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Colton's note p. 376.



ian varnish is to be met with. In German instruments, the varnish is distinguished by extreme hardness, a glassy lustre, and an absence of all delicate shades of color. The vehicle or menstruum, moreover, is alcohol. In France, the coloring was sometimes good, but in general too pronounced. The varnish of the old English makers lacked transparency. In both these countries the vehicle was oil, but the varnish in quality and texture differed essentially from the Italian.

Three questions occur: first, was this manufacture a secret? second, how was this secret lost? third, are there any writings or clues for perusal and examination? Answers to these questions should clear up the mystery of this so-called lost art.

To begin, then, with the first question, was the manufacture of this varnish a secret? There is no reasonable doubt that it was, but only in a certain way. For a period of about two hundred years, from the time of Gaspar da Salo to that of the Bergonzi, the varnish was common to every Italian violin-maker. Cremona had no monopoly, for the knowledge and use of it extended to Padua, Venice, Rome, and Naples. It is impossible, therefore, during this long time to say that the selection of ingredients or the methods of preparation employed in the manufacture of this substance, so well known and widely used, were in any sense a secret. But a little later quite a change is observable. From a hundred Italian instruments of this later date, only a notable few can be selected as possessing the true varnish; and that this marked characteristic in the case of these few is not the result of mere chance is apparent from the fact that the artists who made them have consistently applied it to all their productions. From about

1745 to about 1760, then, the manufacture of this varnish may be properly called a secret, as being confined to a chosen few.

A bitter rivalry had always existed between the Neapolitan, Venetian, and Cremonese schools. Alessandro Gagliano, probably a pupil of Stradivarius, had established himself at Naples. Dominico Montagnana and Sanctus Seraphino were the masters of the art in Venice. The Cremonese makers seem to have relied on their sonorous, well selected wood, their established principles of construction, and their ancient reputation; the Venetian, on the beauty of their wood, and careful finish; and the Neapolitan, on their exceedingly low price.

As a knowledge of the varnish became at last confined to a few, instances are not wanting of the persecution of such by their less fortunate fellow-workmen. It is quite evident, that, apart from any considerations of beauty, the importance of the varnish as an acoustic element was well recognized.

The second question now presents itself: how was the secret lost? A careful and repeated examination, extending to a vast number of objects, reveals the fact that the varnish of the Italian violin-maker of the time of Stradivarius and before him was common to the painter, the varnisher, and the gilder as well. Let an ancient piece of Italian furniture — a chair, a cabinet, the case of a spinet or harpsichord — be examined, and, provided it has escaped modern retouching, the varnish might be by Stradivarius himself. Generally it is colorless, then the quality and texture are the indications; but occasionally it is of brilliant hues, and then it proclaims itself to the eye at once. Let specimens of a

later date, say 1760, be examined ; here is no such varnish. This is smooth, fairly lustrous, hard, and durable. The chair of 1725 presents a surface broken and worn away ; that of 1760, one comparatively smooth, and fairly able to endure further vicissitudes of time.

Between the years 1740 and 1760, great changes in the manufacture of varnish were introduced. The old soft gums and their menstrua, capable in themselves of dissolving them, were discarded in favor of newer and more complicated processes, producing a result more durable and unchangeable under exposure and rough wear.

The old fashion of ornamenting all articles of furniture, whether of ornament or utility, with carvings, had given place to a more sober style. Broad, unrelieved surfaces, depending on the intrinsic beauty of their material, were found a relief to the eye tired with unraveling the mazes of complex carving or painted arabesque. The old, soft, badly wearing varnish no longer sufficed for protection and covering of such surfaces ; hence the new processes, and, for such utilitarian purposes, superior results. The hard copal gums, hitherto undissolvable or only partially so, were found to yield entirely on proper heating and fusion. In 1750, a patent, covering a period of twenty-five years, was granted by the King of France to one Simon Martin, a fan painter, for a process of making varnish from amber, by driving off the succinic acid by means of heat, and the subsequent combination of the residue with oil. From that day to the present, various improvements in this art have gone on uninterruptedly. The field of discovery, the gates to which were opened by such pioneers as Simon Martin, being once entered, the problem of durability, hardness,



and unchangeableness was soon solved. But with the laying aside of the old receipts, the Italian violin varnish became a lost art. The knowledge of its composition, naturally confined to the general manufacturers, was forgotten. There is no doubt that some of the Cremonese and other makers knew how to prepare it, but, as has been shown, its use was not confined to them. The new ingredients — the copals, amber, etc. — would naturally supersede the old as articles of import, and so by degrees those who possessed the secret — for a secret it was certainly regarded by its latest possessors — would find increasing difficulty in obtaining the old constituents. Moreover, the days of violin-making in Italy were over. England, France, and Germany were eager competitors; the stolid build of the first, the gaudy color of the second, the baked wood of the Mittenwalder, or artist of the Black Forest, and the general cheapness of all, held the market. And so it has happened that the art of the old varnish is not lost, but buried in the dust under the wheel of progress. For two hundred years it was in the hands of a nation; and though now a desire for this forgotten knowledge is confined to only a few, it would be absurd to say that persistent inquiry must fail to unravel a skein of so many ends.

The third question now presents itself: Are there any writings or clues for perusal and examination? There are many. An ingenious Frenchman, who long ago wrote a treatise on varnish, has given the following excellent list of authors who have treated upon this subject: —

“Alexis,” Piedmontese [real name of author, Hieronymus Ruscellai]: *Secrets des Arts*; Milan, 1550.

Fiavoranti: *Miroir Universel des Arts et des Sciences*; Bologna, 1564.

Auda: Recueil Abrégé des Secrets Merveilleux ;  
—, 1663.

Zahn, Jean: Oculus Artificialis, etc. ; Nuremberg,  
1685.

Morley, C.: Collections ; London, 1692.

Coronelli, Vincent: Epitome Cosmographique ; Ven-  
ice, 1693.

Pomet: Histoire Générale des Drogues ; Paris, 1694  
(reprinted, 1736).

Buonanni, Phillipe: Traité des Vernis ; Rome, 1713.

Here is a succession of treatises, the earliest written about the time of Gaspar da Salo, and the latest during that of Stradivarius. Here are hundreds of genuine receipts. Is any one of them the right one? Patience and perseverance are necessary, much fitting of old names to their new nomenclatures, and many tiresome comparisons. But these once made, the desired result may be obtained, and the new varnish may possess the old coveted lustrous softness and suppleness. And the colors? the brown, the red, and the yellow?—hidden under quaint and obsolete names, they are all indicated by one and another of these authors, and all are soluble in the one vehicle, forming a colored oil varnish, clear and transparent, which, however long kept, will let fall no sediment.

There is still another branch of this subject which has never, or very rarely, been specified, and this is the *ground-toning*. In all Italian instruments the wood appears to be permeated with a color varying in intensity from pale yellow to almost orange. This color is quite distinct from that of the varnish ; for, however faded by exposure and other causes the latter may be, the ground-tone almost always retains its color. The vio-

lins with red varnish afford the finest examples of this ground-toning. On such, its tawny yellow is the most intense, and offers a splendid foil to the superimposed color, toning and giving life to it. How it was composed or applied, whether as a wash or stain, or as a distinct varnish, none of the authors give any information. But from their miscellaneous lists of the drugs, dye-stuffs, and coloring matters common to the Italian markets, it is quite possible that a selection could be made which would fulfill all the required conditions of color and stability.

But though supplied with the ground-tone, another element is needed before the exact reflex of the Italian varnish can be reproduced; and that is the natural color of the old wood.

The problem of the old varnish is solvable by any one who deems the reward worth the trial of patience and perseverance, two elements most effective in the task of interlining the broken sentences of tradition.

#### PAGANINI.

No one can thoroughly understand Paganini without an educated appreciation of melody and the art of giving life and expression to it. Without a knowledge of the Italian art of singing, it is impossible to properly appreciate his playing. Contemporary with Pasta, Pizzaroni, Rubini, Malibran, Paganini rivaled them, singing on his violin melodies, many of which had been sung by those artists, and astonishing even *them* more than the public. In fact, his style was so original, and the means by which he produced his stirring effects was so varied and so unexpected, his music so filled with ever new episodes of startling beauty or original quaintness, that the violinists of the day stood confounded.



Half the conceited virtuosos would not condescend to study the mysteries of the violin and the soul of melody, or his principles of fingering and manifold colors of tone and expression, but called all they could not comprehend and themselves execute "tricks" and "playing for the multitude." Nothing has been produced equaling his twenty-four "Studies," either in beauty, originality, or difficulty of performance. They stand unrivaled. Liszt has arranged many of them for the piano in a most masterly manner. He became so inspired on hearing Paganini, that he composed a fantasia on the main theme of his "Rondo Campanella." In his obituary notice of Paganini, published in Paris, he places him above all virtuosos. As some of Paganini's pieces required the violin to be tuned higher than the normal pitch, it was necessary that his strings should be thinner than ordinary to endure the increased strain and give a free vibration. Tuned in this way, for some effects they possessed a peculiar timbre and far-reaching tone, particularly the G string, which, for some occasions, he tuned up to C natural. The violinists of that day used thick strings. They seemed to consider the greatness and variety of the tone to be a result of sheer muscular force, and thus loaded the string with a weight which retarded its vibration. The heavy strings certainly gave a louder tone, but it was much more gross, and, besides, required such effort that often the disagreeable friction of the bow could be distinguished mixed with the tone. The humidity and heat of the concert-room often caused the E string to break in the midst of a performance. After Paganini had been heard, the adoption of thinner strings became general.

Paganini's style of bowing and producing the tone

was founded on Tartini's exquisite method. He held his upper arm close to his body, using mainly his lower arm for the bow stroke, keeping the wrist extremely flexible. From his peculiar build he could cross his elbows readily. The elbow of his left arm he brought very much to the right in playing. This singular flexibility greatly assisted him in his incredible flights, and made easy for him passages impossible for another. His hand was rather small and thin, and the little finger peculiarly long. The strings of his violin were rather high from the finger-board; this enabled him to give forte passages with great effect, and without the rattling and false vibration always accompanying force when applied to strings close to the finger-board. Owing to his narrow chest and peculiar way of holding the violin, it was easy for him to reach the upper notes. He manipulated the strings at the upper end of the finger-board as easily as other violinists could in the first position. His bow was made after the old Italian style, of a somewhat later shape than that of Tartini's. When strained to the proper tension, the stick was nearly straight. Vuillaume, when he saw this bow, laughed and inquired who could play with such a thing. When Paganini brought it to him to be repaired (he had broken the upper end), Vuillaume offered to make him another, but he was much displeased with the idea, and most decidedly declined the gift, saying he could not think of using any other bow. Paganini especially excelled in giving life to the simplest melodies, in giving to his tone the quality of the human voice; in contrasts of light and shade, and expression, now plaintive, now brilliant and gay, now fantastic. He was unequalled in producing pizzicatos with the left hand, ar-

peggio passages, the tremolo, and the *gettato*. He was the first to establish the rules of artificial harmonic playing, and his numerous passages in single and double harmonics attest the wonderful skill with which he applied them.

In his time it was demanded of artists that they should not only play the compositions of the masters with elegance and nobility of style, but also should be equal to any emergency and ready to improvise embellishments and harmonious variations. Before Rossini no composer wrote out the cadenzas, rather leaving them to the talent of the artist.

The report, circulated in Vienna, that he was a mere charlatan, preceded Paganini's first appearance in that city. So unfavorable an impression had been formed of him that his first concert was but poorly attended. But at the end of the first part, the impression he made upon his few listeners was so great that several of the musicians in the audience ran out into the coffee-houses and hotels, exclaiming enthusiastically that he was a perfect marvel, and that all must come to hear him. The result was that at the performance of the second part the house was nearly full. Afterwards, partly from wonder, and partly from jealousy, all sorts of stories were told about him. It was said that when his mother died, he made her breathe her last breath into his violin ; that he was a culprit who had spent years in imprisonment with only his violin for a companion ; that he had gradually worn out all the strings but the G, hence his wonderful skill in playing anything on that one string. It seemed of little avail that he procured and published official testimonials from his native town to the effect that he had never been in prison. Nor did



he put an end to the story of his mother's death, by publishing a letter from her, showing that she was still living.

At a soirée given by Troupenas, the music publisher, in Paris, in 1830, Paganini gave one of the most wonderful exhibitions of his skill. Rossini, Tamburini, Lablache, Rubini, De Beriot, and Malibran were of the party. Malibran, after singing one of her spirited arias, challenged Paganini, who said "Madam, how could I dare, with all the advantages you possess in beauty and your incomparable voice, take up your glove?" His declining was of no avail; the whole company, aware that such an opportunity might never occur again, urged him most strongly, and finally persuaded him to send for his violin. After an introduction, in which gleamed now and then the motive of Malibran's song, he gave the whole melody with additional *florituras*, so that the audience, amazed and overwhelmed, could not help confessing that he was the master. I heard this from several of the persons who were present, and Malibran herself was the most emphatic of all in proclaiming him the victor.

Paganini's last Parisian concert occurred in the year 1832, at the Grand Opéra. He played three pieces. Habeneck, professor of music at the Conservatoire, on this occasion wielded the bâton. He had been instrumental in introducing the symphonies of Beethoven for the first time, in opposition to the opinions of the other professors of the Conservatoire. The orchestra was composed of the professors, and such pupils as had taken the first prize; it was justly regarded as the finest orchestra in Europe. Habeneck wished to introduce Beethoven, but had hitherto failed in ex-

citing an appreciation for his mighty works. Finally he hit upon a stratagem. It was his birthday, and he invited the members of the orchestra to a collation to be given in the concert-hall of the Conservatoire, and he begged them to bring their instruments. When his health was proposed, he suggested in response that, if they really wished to give him great joy, they would consent to play the "Allegro in C minor" from the first symphony of Beethoven. He explained to them beforehand how he would have them handle the principal motive. Of course all agreed. •He knew his success from the manner in which they struck the first chords. Exclamations of admiration followed the close of the Allegro, and the concluding movement of the symphony was played with enthusiasm to the end. Now they requested that the symphony should be played at the next concert, and after twenty rehearsals it was given with immense success. Such was the man who conducted on this occasion. He was a leader of great ability, and the players, the majority of them graduates of the Conservatoire, were entirely under his command. Paganini played, as far as I can remember, his "Concerto in B minor," with the "Rondo Campanella," also two variations of Haydn's famous "Austrian National Hymn," and concluded with his "Moto Perpetuo." The public were accustomed to applaud (I have the whole scene before me as if it were to-day) when he appeared at the side. When his shadow was seen approaching, the audience applauded as usual, but to their astonishment Paganini did not appear, but instead a man in black, with a music-stand, which he placed on the stage near the conductor. Again a shadow was seen on the wall, and again the

applause sounded. A man appeared clad in livery ; he bore two candles, which he placed on the stand and lighted. He disappeared, amid the laughter of the audience. Then came the first fellow in black, this time with a manuscript in his hand. The house behaved as before, evidently confusing the black fellow. Finally came another shadow, and this time it was Paganini, but the applause was now withheld, and he was not recognized until he came forward to the foot-lights. There he made a forced salutation, accompanied with a contraction of the facial muscles, seeming much puzzled at his silent reception. He had been in another room, and knew nothing of the ludicrous scene which had preceded his appearance. Immediately Habeneck raised his bâton, as if to give his order to the orchestra, but Paganini shook his head. He took his bow in his left hand together with his violin, and thrust his right into the recesses of the pockets of his swallow-tailed coat, and brought out a pair of dark-green gloves, which he transferred to his left hand. He shook his head again, and, after a deeper plunge, produced a large white handkerchief, which he also placed in his left hand, accompanying the action with an audible expression of dissatisfaction. A still deeper thrust revealed a brown box, which he regarded with a nod and a smile, and added to the other things in his left hand. He now went through the same deliberate motions in passing the handkerchief and gloves back to his pocket. He then opened the box and took out a pair of spectacles, meditated a moment, apparently considering the next move, and finally, taking the bow in his right hand, and bending a little, put the spectacles on and looked about in a complacent manner. But how changed he was !



The glasses were dark blue, giving a ghastly appearance to his emaciated face ; they looked like two large holes in his countenance. Raising his foot and bringing it down promptly, he gave the signal to begin. It had been announced as his last concert in Paris for the season, and a true foreboding seemed to thrill through his listeners that they would not again see that lank, angular figure, with its haggard face, or hear again the wondrous witchery of his violin.

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NOTE. — (Page 363). The oblique position of the bar has not been generally adopted. The bar is ordinarily placed with its outer side on a line parallel to the centre line or glue-joint of the top, and at a distance from it about equal to one half the width of the bridge, measured from the outer extremities of the feet. A slight spring is given to the ends of the bar, so that when glued to the top it produces an upward pressure at the centre, under the foot of the bridge. This pressure should equal the downward thrust of the bridge, the force of which will depend upon the angle of the strings over its top. Practice soon discovers a certain modicum of spring which agrees fairly with a certain height of bridge. An entirely successful result is not always insured, but a positive failure is avoided. But in the case of the oblique bar, no such common factor can be found to fit all cases even averagely well. Each instrument presents its own particular problem. The spring at each end must be accurately determined by mechanical means, which will take into account both the resistance of the top, due to its comparative strength of fibre, and the resistance due to the form of modeling. The same degree of obliquity, and position relative to the foot of the bridge which it supports, will not answer equally well in all cases. But when the required conditions are fulfilled, the oblique bar does, beyond doubt, very greatly increase the depth and volume of tone, particularly of the lower strings. Mr. Bull spent many years in endeavoring to formulate the rules which govern this most perplexing part of the organism of the violin. His observations and experiments demonstrated to him the correctness of the oblique position ; and though, as was his wont, he frankly

owned to more failures than one, his instances of success, illustrated by his Da Salo and many other instruments, bore most convincing witness to the truth of his theory.

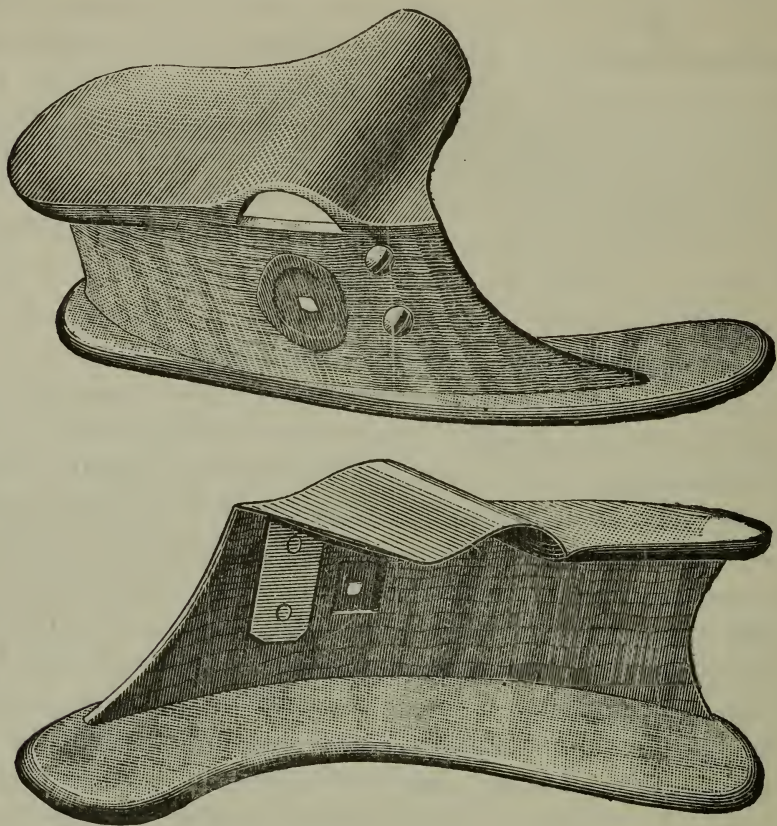
WALTER E. COLTON.

Ole Bull, in the last interview which he had with Mr. Colton, said to him: "You have the tools, the knowledge, and the time for this work, and you will be able to give at last a rule by which less skilled workmen may be guided in the placing of the oblique bar." After Mr. Colton had sent the above note, a query addressed to him brought the following response, which it is hoped he will pardon us for printing, as it gives just what ought to be known in order to save violins from being injured in the hands of ordinary workmen claiming to understand the principle of the oblique bar:—

The second attempt in placing the bar would be, in the hands of the ordinary repairer, nearly as much of an experiment as the first. In the first place, he lacks the apparatus for determining the spring. In regard to the position relative to the foot of the bridge and degree of obliquity, these appear to be governed by the height of the top and thickness of material. The higher the top, the more the obliquity; the thicker the top, the more the bar can be removed from under the foot of the bridge. I presume I have placed a hundred bars, and have used up many cheap violins in trying to arrive at something like a governing principle, and even now the first attempt may not be all I could wish. Mr. Bull, aided by his own experience, and by some marvelous intuition, compared to which the knowledge of the average repairer is mere clodhopperism, appeared to be able to determine the requirements of an instrument submitted to him. One reason why I did not speak more strongly in favor of the general adoption of the oblique position was because, apart from the spring, the ratio of which and means of determining it I believe I have settled, I could not lay down a positive and definite rule regarding the place and degree of obliquity which would apply to all cases. So I did not like to advocate on my own account, or by inference, that of Mr. Bull, the immediate advisability of an operation the result of which might be in any way doubtful. When I think of the horror with which the connoisseur contemplates even the idea of removing the top of his valued instrument, I feel that, beyond sticking stoutly to the truth of Mr. Bull's theory, I am not in a condition to competently advise.

Mr. Bull's second attempts were almost always successful. I honestly think I should not fail more than once. But if I say this, I am calling attention to my own work, Mr. Bull having passed away, when it belongs to him.

WALTER E. COLTON.



**THE CHIN-REST.**— This particular form of chin-rest was an entirely original invention of Mr. Bull. It prevents all unavoidable contact of the violin with the body, and at the same time is itself attached to a point of minimum vibration, the tail-pin block. Its use shows perfectly the deadening effect of the pressure of the chin upon the top over the end of the bar, and upon the tail-piece, and also that of the chest and shoulder upon the back. In the original form, the chin-rest and tail-pin were one. A small rib should run along the tail-pin, and an appropriate slot should be cut in the hole for its reception. This prevents any possibility of the chin-rest's turning upon the pin while playing. Mr. Bull designed separating the pin and rest by making the former with a square instead of round head, and fitting the latter over it, a screw with a wide flat



head and leather washer securing the two parts. In this way the rest could be removed without the disagreeable necessity of unstringing the violin. Each rest ought to be specially made for the violin it is to be applied to. This, and the necessity of some enlargement of the violin-case, are the two possible drawbacks to its general manufacture.

WALTER E. COLTON.

## POEMS AND PERSONAL TRIBUTES.

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TIL OLE BULL.
J. S. WELHAVEN.<sup>1</sup>

HVOR sødt at favnes af Aftnens Fred,  
 Naar Droslen fløjter i Skoven,  
 Og Birken suser ved Elvens Bred,  
 Og Nökken spiller i Voven.  
 Der er en vemodblandet Fryd,  
 Som Nordens Alfer male,  
 Med dæmpet Kvad, med Harpe lyd,  
 Med Suk i dunkle Dale.

Han stod og lytted en Sommerkveld  
 Og havde stemt sine Strenges,  
 Da gik Akkorden fra Skov og Fjeld  
 Og over duggede Enge ;  
 Og alle Strenges klang dertil  
 Med underbare Toner,  
 Som Droskens Kluk og Nökkens Spil,  
 Og Suk af Birkekroner.

Og al den Smerte, al den Lyst,  
 Der bor i Nordens Sone,  
 Har lagt sig drømmende til hans Bryst  
 Og sittret gjennem hans Tone.

<sup>1</sup> See page 104 above.

O, hör den stille Melodi,  
 Der dæmper Stormens Harme ;  
 Din Barndom vugger sig deri  
 Paa ömme Liljearme.

Det er den dejligste Strengklang,  
 Der letter Længselens Vinger ;  
 Da nynner Hjertet sin egen Sang,  
 Mens Strengen bæver og klinger.  
 Der er ej Savn, Der er ej Nag,  
 Som ej hans Streng kan lindre ;  
 Han vækker med sit Trylleslag  
 En Vaardag i dit Indre.

O hil dig, salige Toneskald  
 Med Guddomsmagt i din Bue !  
 Fra dig gaar Jubelens Fossefald,  
 Du tænder Andagtens Lue.  
 Naar Verden lytter til dit Kvad  
 Og bæver ved din Vælde,  
 Da skjælver Glemmigejens Blad  
 Af Fryd paa dine Fjelde.

[TRANSLATION.]

TO OLE BULL.

How sweet is the quiet of eventide  
 When the throstle his love betrayeth,  
 And the birches sing by the riverside,  
 While the elf in the ripples playeth !  
 Their benison the North hills send,  
 A chastened peace revealing ;



With tender voices harp-tones blend,  
Their sighs through dark vales stealing.

In a summer eve he listening stood,  
His strings all tuned together,  
While music burst from field and wood  
Across the dewy heather.  
Then all his strings the gift repay,  
With a wondrous echo ringing,  
Of the throstle's love, and the elfin play,  
And the sighs of the birch-trees, singing ;

As every joy and every smart  
In Norway's borders dwelling  
Had lain and dreamed upon his heart,  
And in each note were swelling.  
Hark to that quiet, restful strain !  
It soothes the spirit's crying,  
Until like babes we rest again,  
As if on lilies lying.

While raptures break across his strings  
Our longings soar to heaven ;  
And every heart its own song sings,  
By joy or sorrow riven.  
Of haunting grief or cruel blow  
The memory is forsaken ;  
A spell is in his magic bow  
The very spring to waken.

Then, blessed Tone-bard, hail to thee !  
From heaven thy bow was given :  
What floods of joy hast thou set free,  
What visions shown of heaven !

To sway far thousands is thy lot,  
 Strange peoples tell thy story,  
 While here each blue forget-me-not  
 Trembles to share thy glory.

# NORGE TIL AMERIKA VED OLE BULLS DIDREISE.

[NORWAY TO AMERICA ON OLE BULL'S DEPARTURE.]

H. WERGELAND.

O Amerika, betro'd  
 har jeg dig med ængstlig Ahnen  
 Ham, min Fattigdoms Klenod,  
 Ham, mit Hjertes bedste Blod !  
 — Lad Platanen  
 kjærligt ham imødebruse,  
 Alleghannen  
 ham i venlig Grotte huse,  
 Susquehannen  
 som en dæmpet Harpe suse  
 Ham, min Elskling, ham imod !

Han med Buens lette Spil  
 kan til Dands din Panther tvinge,  
 og (hvad der skal mere til)  
 Slave-Ejeren til Smil.  
 Han kan bringe  
 Carolinas arme Neger  
 til at springe  
 gladere end Barn, som leger,  
 sig at svinge  
 snellere end Hjulets Fger . .  
 O, Han kan det, om han vil.

Men, som om hans Bue blev  
pludselig med Tordner svanger,  
som om den i Luften skrev  
trylleformlet Frihedsbrev,  
Skræk og Anger  
fylder Herrens Hjertekammer  
som med Slinger,  
tusind Blik i Mulmet flammer  
hos hans Fanger . .  
Ve ham, ve ham ! Slavens Jammer  
klagende min Bull beskrev.

Far da hen, far hen, min Sön !  
Lad din Tryllebue skjænke  
arme Negers Suk ilön  
Styrken af en bönhört Bön,  
saa hans Lænke  
for dens Strög maa sönderbriste !  
Da sig sænke  
signende Platanens Kviste,  
og jeg tænke  
kan med Stolthed, dig at miste,  
Ole Bull, min Sön, min Sön !

Thi hist vest, did Du vil fly,  
er min egen Friheds Kjerne  
voxet i Plataners Ly,  
baaret hid paa svanger Sky.  
Derfor gjerne  
vilde jeg taknemlig sende  
til dens fjerne  
Fosterland ved Havets Ende  
herlig Stjerne,



og af dem, som hjemme brænde,  
straaler ingen med dit Ry.

## NORGES FARVEL TIL OLE BULL.

[NORWAY'S FAREWELL TO OLE BULL.]

H. WERGELAND.

Farvel, min stolte Søn ! Farvel !  
Følg Kaldet i din dybe Sjel !

Før bandt til mine Skjær jeg let  
den vilde Pelikan end det.

Før standsede jeg Havets Gang  
og Stormens Flugt, end Skjaldens Trang.

Drag hen, min Søn ! Den samme Lyst  
har rørt sig i din Moders Bryst.

Jeg ogsaa digtet har engang.  
Heimskringlas Liv det er min Sang.

Jeg skrev min egen Epopee.  
Hver Helt var deri en Idee.

Jeg skrev med Evighedens Skrivt :  
med Kongers Daad og Mænds Bedrivt.

Se, ved mit Hjerte gyldenblaa  
den store Havets Harpe laa !

Paa den fik sjelfuld Tanke, för  
kun navnlös, Navn. . . . Hör "Frithjof !" hör !

Hör længe fra dens Strenges skjalv  
Lyd af dit Navn, Sjökonning Alf!

Min Harald er et Heltedigt.  
Hvo maler Verden et saa rigt?

Saa skjön en Fantasi har knapt  
en Skjald som blonde Gyða skabt.

Alnorden bævte for de Ord,  
jeg grov i röden Hafursfjord.

Et herligt höit Haleluja  
var Sigurds Fart til Jorsala.

I haarde Birkebeengeled  
jeg fantaserte Noder ned.

Ved Fimbureid hvor löd de vildt!  
Paa Hvitingsö hvor fredsomt mildt!

Ved Holmengraa din *Guerriera*,  
i Nidaros din *Preghiera*.

Se Hakon i hans Kongesal!  
Hvor majestætiskt et Final!

Nu er der visseligen i  
min Sjel meer Klögt end Poesi.

Dog flöd endnu i fyrig Stund  
en Frihedshymne af min Mund.

Jeg ligner egen Mark, som den  
nu ligger der höstblegnet hen.

Som sparsom fattig Pige, lagt  
Min Dal har hen sin Höitidsdragt.

Dog vil jeg gjennemlede hver,  
om ei en Blomst til Dig der er.

Til dig, min Søn ! min Søn, som gav  
mig større Glands end Konnings Grav.

O, vant til Sønners Verdensry,  
mit Öje funkler op paany.

Hvor arm jeg er, man dog Demant  
meer dyr end Glædesblik ei fandt.

Ak, er der i den Glands ei Glöd ?  
Bli'r dig for koldt din Moders Skjöd ?

Nei, flyv ! udbred din Moders Navn !  
Din Hæder tröster da mit Savn.

### TIL OLE BULL.

[ON HIS SEVENTIETH BIRTHDAY.]

JONAS LIE.

Skjönt Purpuret ruller  
ej over din Skulder,  
en Konge dog er Du forvist, —  
Geniet er Kaaben,  
Du bar ifra Daaben,  
og Buen din Önskekvis !



## OLE BULLS DÖD.

[THE DEATH OF OLE BULL.]

ANDREAS MUNCH.<sup>1</sup>

Gamle Gran med Sne paa Lokker  
Fast i haarde Fjeldbund staar,  
Vinterstormen ei den rokker,  
Rank den grønnes som i Vaar.

Saa til Norges Pryd og Ære  
Ole Bull for Verden stod,  
Kunde Sölverkronen bære  
Blussende i Ungdomsmod.

Aldrig syntes han at ældes,  
Frisk hans Toneström end löd,  
Og den kom med vore Fjeldes  
Rene Luft til Sydens Glöd.

Over Verdenshavet drog han  
Til et Hjem i fjerne Vest,  
Aldrig helt det dog betog ham,  
Han var der kun hædret Gjæst.

Altid droges han tilbage  
Til sin elskte Födestavn,  
Altid maatte han dog tage  
Fæste i den gamle Havn.

Det var som ny Kraft han hentet  
Fra sin haarde Barndomsjord. —

<sup>1</sup> Poet Laureate of Norway.

Og iaar man did ham vented,  
Som'ren kaldte ham til Nord.

Lysö ved de blanke Sunde,  
Nær den gamle Klostermark,  
Havde smykket sine Lunde,  
Hvor han bygged sig en Ark.

Flaget vaied alt fra Taarne,  
Prydet var den lyse Hal,  
Blomsterdufte bleve baarne  
Ud mod ham, der komme skal.

Ak, da hörtes dunkle Rygter :  
Han laa syg i fremmed Land !  
Ingen Fare dog man frygter,  
Ole Bull ei segne kan !

Og han kom. Alt Skibet glider  
Fjorden ind med dyre Fragt,  
Og fra Klippekestens Sider  
Hilses han af Sommerpragt.

Men han ei fra Borde springer  
Rank og ungdomslet som för —  
Varsomt man en Syg kun bringer  
Op til Hjemmets aabne Dör.

Det var altsaa sandt ! — Den Stærke  
Rammet var af Sygdoms Pil,  
Men dog kunde man bemærke  
Om hans blege Mund et Smil.

Mildt han hilste til dem Alle,  
Glæden lyste af hans Blik.

Maaske Hjemmet kunde kalde  
Til hans Bryst en Helsens Drik?

Ak, som Walter Scott fra Syden  
Droges til sit Abbotsford,  
Vilde ikkun dö ved Lyden  
Af Flodbølgen om hans Gaard,

Saa den norske Sanger stunded  
Til sit norske Ölands Hus.  
Blidelig han der nu blunded  
Dysset ind af Bölgens Sus.

Men en Dag han vaagned rolig,  
Saa sig om i skjönnne Hjem,  
Bad sin Viv, som fulgte trolig,  
Spille Mozarts Requiem.

Og paa disse Himmeltoner  
Toneskjaldens Aand sig svang  
Op til hine lyse Zoner,  
Hvor der lyder Englesang.

Men hans Fædreland tilbage  
Havde dog hans Legem end.  
Under hele Folkets Klage  
Förtes det til Bergen hen.

Skib paa Skib Ligsnekken fulgte  
Som en Konges Jordefærd,  
Og den Drot, hvem Kisten dulgte,  
Var vel saadan Hyldning værd.

Rundtom Vaagen, graadkvalt, stille  
Trængtes Folket, Rad bag Rad,



Alle de ham følge vilde  
Sidste Gang i Födestad.

Der, i Ly af Barndomsfjelde.  
Hviler nu hans ædle Stöv,  
Birk og Hæg fortroligt hælde  
Sig mod Graven med sit Löv.

Trosten synger sødt derover  
Hver en Vaar sin Morgenbön—  
Han, som blidt derunder sover,  
Var en ægte Norges Sön.

Derfra vil hans Eftermæle  
Naa til fjerne Tidens Gang,  
Vække mange Kunstnersjæle  
Til at følge ham i Sang.

Norges Folk! Giv dette Minde  
Og de ydre Formers Vægt!  
Lad hans skjønne Billed finde  
Vei til senest Efterslægt!

### TIL OLE BULL.

[SUNG AT THE FUNERAL SERVICE.]

JOHN LUND.

Du godt har holdt Ord, talt Norriges Sag  
Og baaret dets Ry viden Lande;  
Du löftet har höit dit Fædrelands Flag  
Rundt om paa de fjerneste Strande.  
Ja Fyrster og Folk sin Hyldning har bragt  
Din blöde og malmstærke Bue;

Et Scepter den blev, som Storme har lagt,  
Og tændt har Begeistringens Lue.

Naar Buen Du strög, om borte Du var,  
Det klang som et : " Leve vort Norge ! "  
Thi altid din Hug til Norge Dig bar,  
Alt kan for din Kjærlighed borge.  
Du elsked dit Land, dets veirbidte Strand,  
Og aldrig Du kunde det glemme,  
Og Folket Dig elsked, Kvinde som Mand,  
De vidste, kun her var Du hjemme.

Saa Tak da for alt, for Toner, for Sang,  
For Glöden, Du tændte og vakte.  
Hav Tak for din kjække, mandige Gang,  
Hav Tak for hvert Offer, Du bragte.  
Nu nedlagt er Buen, Tonen dör hen,  
Dit Minde dog aldrig skal svinde :  
Det Norge, Du var saa fuldtro en Ven,  
En Evighedskrans vil Dig binde.

### TO OLE BULL.

BY BARON DE LA MOTTE FOUQUÉ.

[From his Preface to his "Selected Works," where he introduces it as "a song of salutation to one who, honored by me as master, is not less dear to me as a man" (Tracy's translation).]

Profoundly dreamt a youth on Norland waste;  
But no — it is not waste where fairy rings  
Reflect the past as well as future things,  
When love and woe in boding tones are drest.  
They greeted him, they kissed him, and retreated;  
They left for him an instrument of sound,

Whose forceful strings with highest deeds could bound,  
And yet with childish frolics be entreated.  
He wakes — the gift he seizes, comprehending  
Its sweet mysterious pleasure how to prove,  
And pours it forth in pure harmonious blending.  
O mayst thou, ever victor, joyful move,  
Thou Northland sailor, on life's voyage wending,  
Conscious of God within thee and above.

ON HEARING OLE BULL IN 1879.

BY PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

What note is this of infinite appeal  
That wakes beneath thy hand's inspired control?  
Is it a prayer from man's most secret soul  
To the dim gods Death only can reveal, —  
Whose hands we know can wound, yet trust may heal?  
Hark, now, for 'twixt the prayer and the prayer's goal,  
From far away, beyond where planets roll,  
Something I hear, or something subtly feel:

Down all the deep, untraveled, star-watched way,  
Faint as a wind at dawn of a June day,  
Comes a divine response: Ah! now 't is here.  
Lo! prayer is turned to passionate triumphing,  
And in thy music's moon-thrilled atmosphere  
My soul drinks deep of some immortal spring.



## OLE BULL.

BY JULIA R. ANAGNOS.

There's a fairy in the violin,  
A Norse imprisoned fay ;  
She struggles in her master's arms,  
And fain would flit away.

But, like the bird whose prison pours  
Song's gold upon the air,  
Stretching our Northern frost-framed walls  
To Southern forests rare,

The gentle chord that binds her breaks  
The fetters of our care ;  
The song of her captivity  
Makes all our lives more fair.

O gentle Fairy ! Lead the way  
Through realms of fiction sweet,  
The cradles of Sicilian day,  
The North-King's halls of sleet.

The whirlwind and the icy blast  
Meet in thy captive wail ;  
Flowers and gems are round thee cast,  
Flung from thy forehead pale ;

But, though we glean a golden glow  
From the sweet spirit's strife,  
Say, is it fair to hold her so,  
A prisoner for life ?

O Master, set the fairy free !  
End her poetic pain :  
Nay, tastes she but the common air,  
She 'll soon fly home again !

## IN MEMORY OF OLE BULL.

[ON BOARD THE CITY OF CHESTER, APRIL, 1881.]

BY LOUISE CHANDLER MOULTON.

Strong as a Viking of his own proud North  
He trod this deck, two little years ago —  
A kinglier man, or one of nobler worth,  
Nor his nor any land shall ever know —  
So brave, so good, so simple and sincere,  
That but to know him was to hold him dear.

The most alive of any man on earth,  
His soul on fire with love for all things true,  
Anointed music's high-priest from his birth,  
A reed heaven's voices seemed to whisper through,  
Shaken at times by their tumultuous sweetness,  
Then hushed with calm of some divine completeness.

To hear his music was to see strange things —  
To enter bright far worlds of love and light —  
To know how star with star forever sings,  
Or weep for deeds that may not be undone  
And souls in bondage to some evil fate,  
With ungirt loins, and lips that cry, "Too late !"

Thus in his strain the depths of all men's hearts  
He sounded — he whom all men loved —

Then left us, as some gracious guest departs  
For whom a higher mansion waits, and proved,  
By the great space left vacant, what his worth  
To us, who see his face no more on earth.

But yet he is not dead. To-night I hear  
The old strain steal across the April sea;  
Almost I fancy 't is himself draws near,  
So much the face of life wears memory —  
When I recall him in those days gone by,  
I know he was too full of life to die.

FROM PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON.

The following, from Mr. Hamerton's "Thoughts about Art," is an appropriate commentary on the advice that Ole Bull used to give the artist, "Play little, and think much:" —

Thus it is said that Ole Bull, the celebrated Norwegian violinist, arrived at his most wonderful effects less by manual practice than meditation. He practiced less and thought more than other violinists. This is quite in keeping with his reflections after hearing Paganini. Ole Bull actually sold his last shirt to hear the mighty master, and, having heard him, instead of saying like the crowd that nothing new was possible after that, began to seek after hitherto unknown effects that even Paganini had not discovered. Both these facts indicate clearly that Ole Bull was a musical transcendentalist, and his long retirement confirms it. A true transcendentalist dislikes publicity, and loves to cultivate himself in solitude.



## FROM MR. LONGFELLOW.

[EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS.]

It seems hardly possible that I shall see that radiant face no more ; and long, long shall I say

“O for the touch of a vanished hand  
And the sound of a voice that is still!”

Remarkable as Ole Bull was as an artist, he was no less so in his social intercourse. His nature was eminently sympathetic. He not only liked his friends, but he loved them. His manners were gentle and affectionate ; his presence in a room filled it with sunshine.

It was said of the French author, Villemain, that when he spoke to a lady, you would think he was presenting her a bouquet. With equal truth might it be said of Ole Bull, so gracious was he and so amiable in his conversation.

## OLE BULL.

BY JAMES T. FIELDS.

It is nearly forty years since I was first introduced to one of the most genial and delightful men I have ever chanced to know. I distinctly recall the sunny morning when I made Ole Bull's acquaintance and began a friendship that was never dimmed during all that long period. Years would intervene when I lost sight of him and knew nothing of his whereabouts, but when he returned from Norway or Italy or Russia, we came together as if we had never parted company for a day. Often when in Boston he made our home his resting

place, and his advent was a delight to us all. He brought sunshine with him, and in the words of the old song —

“ His very foot had music in ’t,  
When he came up the stair.”

His conversation had that indefinable flavor in it which we call *charm*, flowing on and on with indescribable magnetism. To hear him picture with glowing enthusiasm his home in Norway among the fjords, his early days while studying his art, his adventures in the capitals of Europe before his fame had been secured, his various voyages about the world, the celebrated men and women he had known in musical and social walks in every corner of the globe, was a never-failing pleasure. Often, far into midnight, we sat and listened to his reminiscences of Paganini, Malibran, Rubini, Lablache, Liszt, and numerous other distinguished artists, and we never heeded the clock, when he was fairly warmed into enthusiasm by his exciting themes. Ole Bull was an *eloquent* talker *par excellence* — one of the most vivifying companions I have ever been intimate with. I carried him one evening many years ago to a scientific club, and asked him to say something to its members about the construction and makers of the violin. When the president called upon him he modestly rose with the instrument in his hand, and discoursed in a conversational tone for half an hour, so captivating his auditors that they would not allow him to stop, although there were several other speakers on the evening’s programme expecting to be heard. Every one was charmed, and to this day the memory of that exceptional appearance at the club is still recalled with the warmest interest.

Ole Bull was not a man of negations. His likings

and dislikings were positive and not always settled by the wisest judgment, but his leaning was habitually toward the simplest and straight-forward in all things. He said to me once of a person I was inclined to have him like, "Yaas! but he always seems to be behind a corner, peeping round when he should be in front!" He was a delightful mimic, not one of the ungenial, critical sort, but full of impulsive vivacity, eager to impart clear and dramatic impressions of character. No book of travels in the North of Europe ever conveyed to me so graphic a presentation of the manners and customs of the people as his personal sketches, acted out on the parlor floor, of the way in which the inhabitants in cities and villages danced and sang, marched in festive processions, held their fairs, ate their meals, and lived their daily lives. When he thought his voice was not conveying the impression he desired to impart, he would seize his violin and cause that to speak for him in the most picturesque and engaging manner.

He was a spiritual-minded thinker, a sayer of deep things, as well as of witty and merry ones. No man had a finer sense of the mysteries of human life, or could discourse of them more earnestly. The love of liberty was a passion with him, and when he chanted of Freedom his countenance was as of one inspired. It would be superfluous to repeat here what rapturous pleasure Ole Bull's music has afforded to hundreds of thousands in America during the many years he lived among us.

To me he was always a magician and I yielded to his skill whenever he chose to command me. He was an enchanter—a bright, eager, imaginative spirit. He was a companion, lovable, and unparagoned: his absence from those who knew him best can never be supplied.



## FROM MRS. JULIA WARD HOWE.

Mrs. Howe, whose acquaintance Ole Bull had the pleasure and honor of making at the Woman's Congress in Madison, Wis., the autumn of 1879, sent this warm tribute :—

I can contribute a few grateful words concerning his chivalrous interest in all that regards the welfare of women, recalling also the great personal charm of his own companionship. . . . His death, which was so sincerely and so publicly mourned in his own country, did not fail to cast in our midst its shadow of sorrowing sympathy. In the association of the New England Women's Club, Ole Bull will long be remembered as a kind friend, as a distinguished artist, and as a personality unique and charming. He was at once cosmopolitan and patriotic. He loved his own country, and loved ours also, which became his by a sort of adoption. He was a lover at once of art and of humanity, and deserves a place in the record of those who unite skill with sympathy, the artist's cunning with the frank loving nature of the child.

FROM REV. DR. BARTOL'S MEMORIAL SERMON,  
OCTOBER 10, 1880.

"I have raised up one from the North." Isaiah, xli. 25. — It is a curious case of the truth of the old Bible to nature, or rather of the coincidence of the two, that both make more physical and moral account of the north point of the compass than of the south. "Fair weather," saith the book of Job. "cometh out of the north ;" and thence, too, in all ages, has come the clear-

ing of the social sky. All the old prophets and modern geographical scientists, like Mr. Buckle, agree. The south, says the old writ, is "invaded" with "whirlwinds" and armed men. The upper strong Barbarians fall upon to purge the dissolute empire of Rome. From high latitudes come the Scandinavian rovers to be converted into English lords. From Norway, the north way, comes Leif Ericson before Columbus to discover America and have his monument, let us trust, in these last days; and more than forty years ago, yet in the memory of many that hear me, Ole Bull, whom his friend and compeer of kindred genius, the poet and novelist now among us, Björnstjerne Björnson, calls "our greatest citizen," at his burial in the land where seventy years ago he was born, dying in his own house on the Isle of Light or Lysö of a malignant disease, yet with little pain and in full possession of his powers till within a half hour of his expiring breath. . . .

I must not omit my thanks for the delight Ole Bull gave with his violin at his first coming to this country more than forty years ago. From the touch of his bow, as if Neptune were speaking to the sea, a wave swept over the land from that ocean of harmony that slumbers in the human soul. Out of the same deeps came a second wave at the voice, much later among us, of Jenny Lind. Technical criticism cannot countervail much when a man has just wrought a miracle on the spot, and the United States rose to this as, in the same calling, never to any other man. Young and green then, as respects concord and melody, we may have been. The matchless personal grace of the musician, alike at thirty and three-score, may have had its part in the effect. Who that saw it does not remember the appearance that, as Björnson says, made it here, as well as in

Norway on his return, "a feast to look at him;" the supple sway that was rhythm in his frame, so tall, with its breadth of shoulder and tapering waist, the firm feet which the broad platform seemed not worthy to be a stool for, the arms of wrought steel, more flexible than willow wands, the face in which, as much as in any countenance we ever beheld, the smile was a benediction, and the hair that was tossed about his brow as if inspired with the unison of the strings; and had he spoken on the stage where he stood, the whole audience would have known as well as some of us in private soon did, that the violin was not, and no instrument made with hands could be, so sweet as the voice. He was embodied beauty and an incarnate hymn — a mesmeric, irresistible man. . . .

His speech, of which I shall give some samples as I close, like Anton Rubinstein's, was as rare and original as his notes. He was not, like some people I have known, marvelous in a performance as of a sermon or a tune, and, on leaving desk or orchestra, with nought of interest left, the whole man gone, spent, exploded in what had been sounded or said. To be a true artist is a wonderful thing. But into the artist the whole of him, as of none truly great or good, could not be put. . . .

But musical was with him largely a form of patriotic feeling, and for love of liberty for himself and all men he was a living flame. He respected more the nobility of nature than of political schemes. The pretensions of barons and earls in England or elsewhere, not backed up by personal merit, were nought to him, mere ciphers, deriving all their value from their situation in a column. In the honest but reactionary King of Norway he had a social friend; but, in pushing the right assumed of veto against laws of the Norwegian parliament, this little po-



tentate of two or three millions of subjects became his diplomatic foe ; and Ole Bull represented the peasant population of the kingdom. It was natural he should sympathize strongly with us against secession and slavery in our civil war, and he maintained our cause abroad as warmly as he did in our midst. Like David, he declared God's statute of freedom, "speaking of his testimonies before kings and was not ashamed." . . .

It remains to consider Ole Bull not only as an artist and patriot, but man ; for, beyond all else, he was humane, cosmopolite, a citizen of the world, and did not distinguish himself, save by genius which he could not help, from other men, but was in union and close communion with all ; and detract as we may from a man's talents, or criticise as we will his accomplishments, the fact of a great wide and common love for him and from him cannot be set aside. He was a magnet. Living nearer to the North Pole, had he borrowed a bit of the lodestone that poises the planet ? His attraction was as constant and inexhaustible for the world. A young man, a natural player, from our rough Cape Ann yonder, seeks him abroad to get lessons, and Ole welcomes him at once. "How did you like him ?" the young man was asked. "Like him ? I cannot say enough to tell you." Money went from him, as it came, like wind or water. Being unpractical if not careless almost to a fault, he was imposed upon by a false title of land for a Norwegian colony in Pennsylvania ; charges for litigation were added ; he had intended to buy a ship to transport the colonists at his own expense, — and out of pocket hundreds of thousands of dollars, he became poor, sick, and subject to arrest. He said, "I shall pursue the swindlers ;" then, reflecting, he remarked : "That is not according to the Master's precept, but if I

kiss my enemy what have I left for my friend?" "My friends," he said, "will never defraud me, for they know I am theirs." "I am not content," he told me, "with the golden rule, for I cannot expect others to do to me as I do to them." He was not a professor of Christianity or of religion in any form. He informed me he got such a shock and revulsion from the doctrines he heard preached in his youth that he was permanently alienated from going to church; but so much the worse for the Christians if they reject and excommunicate him. He said to me: "They showed me so many statues and images, coarse or blood-colored, in Italy, it made me sick and I wanted to see a cow!" Why, I inquired of him, do the manufacturers of violins not illustrate the law of evolution, and make as good instruments at least as Stradivarius, Amati, and Gaspar da Salo? "Because," he answered, "they do not consider it a holy mission." Earnest in his nature, like the hot geysers of the North, he was as winsome in his manners as any prince of the East; and, I doubt not, a true test would detect blood of the Orient in his veins, as he said he learned from Italy what it is to sing. Yet Norway, says Björnson, gave to his music its theme or ground, and well does Henrik Wergeland make Norway herself sing to him.

We must, he one day told me, see our fellow's errors and sins, but often "not say what we see," putting his long forefinger on his lips as he spoke. He graciously insinuated, rather than bluntly asserted, what he thought. At the Chestnut Street club he made a marvelous speech, in which he praised the curvilinear instead of direct style of the Spanish tongue. He preferred suggestion to proposition, as do all the likewise finely-strung. But, although he had no dogmas to offer,



never lived one who accredited more the being of God and immortality of the soul, and the immense superiority of unseen supernal forces to the seen. Thus he lived an ideal life, free from mercenary aims, so charming and enchanting men that his name became a household word, and the great manager in any city had to spend little time or means advertising him, if it were in the air that the magician would come. . . .

Honor, then, in this sacred place, to the man and artist, Ole Bull. He held a sublime and tricky, yet utterly simple bow. If he lifted us, round after round, to heaven, he could lower us, too, with his art, gently and safely to the ground. . . . He displayed wondrous tonegyrations, and never, as with a wooden rule, drew mechanical parallel lines. He was a troubadour with his shell. When, like a merryman, he made us laugh, the expression of his face showed his soul still aloft. He was no materialist or sensualist, but a spiritualist in the deepest sense. I judge of men by their treatment of women; and how refined and grand his bearing was to the sex is well known in every country our strange and singular fascinator visited. . . .

I have missed the portrait, I meant, if a facsimile could be furnished of it for any other man. We sometimes say of a man he was a paragon, gem, "one entire and perfect chrysolite." *Jean Paul Richter the only*, the Germans say. My subject to-day is unique. There never on earth will be another Ole Bull. He was the diamond called solitaire. The Jews were mistaken when, in the new teacher, they thought Elias or one of the old prophets had come again. God does not repeat himself; genius is a fresh revelation, and never, in just the same form, descends. Speaking as in the presence of those to whom companionship, country, and kindred



blood endeared this man of transcendent stature, yet with none of our occidental stiffness, so lowly and familiar that he wanted once with a friend to leave the chairs and get down on the floor to converse, I should be bankrupt if at least in this paper money I did not try to pay my debt. Seventy years of age; the Scripture term was his prime. He died young in heart and hope, and friend and housemate declare they cannot think and do not know him dead, as the tropical sun, suddenly setting, is not quenched, though leaving all dark behind. Aspiring and proceeding, despite his gray locks, he seemed an undeveloped child. Nothing in his mental constitution was fixed or had grown hard. He had not subsided from the gush and sparkle of life into the sediment of a form or stalagmite of a creed. The crystallization went on unfinished in the upper chambers of his soul, and had no cavern like the stalactites of the mine in which to drop. No decay gave hint of an end. There is sickness; death, but no end. He grew, advanced, never stopped, nor did the sutures, even at seventy, quite close over that busy brain. "To have to work so at my age!" said the French painter, Thomas Couture; but Ole Bull said, "I should vegetate without new engagements to fulfill." He so lived, therefore, as to convince us of immortality. I know not of what sovereign or captain from the North, the hill-country of Judæa, Isaiah wrote; but when I think how majestic and gentle was this head man and leader from our modern Norway, I give him the tribute of my text, as one might salute a born deliverer and true king.

FROM REV. DR. A. McKENZIE'S SERMON, ON  
THANKSGIVING DAY, 1880.

From these men of our own Commonwealth let me turn to a man of another land, whose venerable and stately presence has been often seen in our streets; who has been the citizen of many climes, making his name a familiar word, and filling the air with melody; a man who stood before kings and held them in wondering silence by the witchery of his fingers, and the harmony of his thoughts; who drew the souls of men after him by the sound of the mystic strings he touched. He made to himself a great renown, the music and the man; both were honored, both were loved. Now the hands have lost their cunning, and the good, gray head is seen no more. Yet will he keep his place with all who knew him. It was among his own people that he was greatest and best. He loved his country, its men and women, its mountains and valleys, its rivers and lakes, its history and its hope. He carried it with him where he went. He sought its honor and toiled for its welfare. Loyal and loving, he wore its name upon his brow. When he stood as one entranced, his tall form swaying to and fro, his eye gazing far away, and the utter stillness was scarcely broken by the sweet, weird strains which floated into it, it was the heart of Norway we saw and heard, incarnate in her son, beating, breathing, singing in his spirit.

When he lay wearied and dying in his island-home Norway grew still. Spacious and comely was the room which he had made for song, where the singer rested; but the land which mourned was wider.

He heard the requiem there, but the land was to be

full of requiem. From off the quiet waters came the tribute of admiring minstrelsy, which long will be repeated.

When he was gone, royalty and humanity hastened with their homage to his memory. The great city begged for his honored form to give it choicest burial. It lay in state in his own house. It was borne in grand procession to the distant shore. The walks were strewn with living green. The people wept and praised. His trophies went before him, but the stricken hearts of men were on every side of him. The eloquent words of friendship and reverence were spoken. He found his resting-place among the great, on a spot which had been kept for a king — which had found a king.

And he wore no royalty but his great manhood.

Why this honor to a man? Because he had dealt well by the land. He had given it good and glory, and the gift returned. Norway loved him because he loved Norway.



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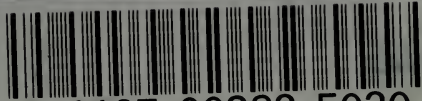












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